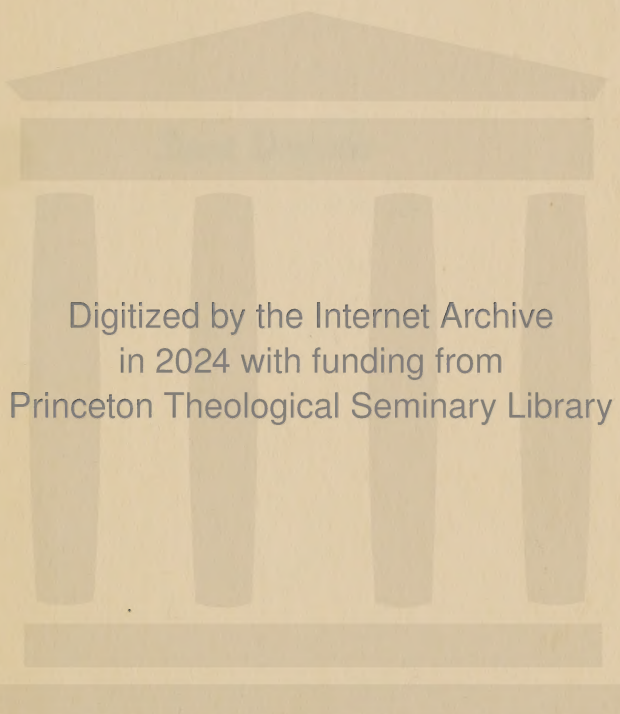


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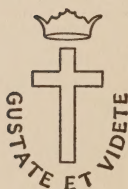
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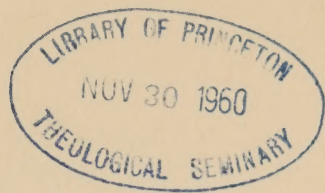
Very Reverend John L. Callahan, O.P., S.T.M.

LITERARY EDITOR

Reverend Jordan Aumann, O.P., S.T.D.

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Saint Dominic

Saint Domingo de Guzmán

BY

SISTER MARY JEAN DORCY, O.P.

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Preface ❧

ON a hot August night in 1221 a saint whom the Church has designated as a "holy athlete of Christ" finished his course and gave up his soul to the God whom he had served, consistently and at great speed, for fifty-one years. Around him were grouped his sons, men of half a dozen nations, who ten years before had hardly heard of Dominic Guzmán and now were quite willing to die for him. Like any father of any family, he spoke to them of their inheritance; not wealth, for he had not even a room in which to die nor a habit in which to be buried. But he left an immortal legacy, a blazing enthusiasm for God which the Christian world had not seen since the day of Pentecost. His testament was as simple and as potent as the Sermon on the Mount, and dealt with the same basic verities:

"Have charity one for another;
Guard humility;
Make your treasure out of voluntary poverty."

For a little over seven hundred years, the sons and daughters of this man of God have tried to put into words something of the world-shaking force that was Dominic. No one has ever quite succeeded. Getting St. Dominic into print is like printing Fra Angelico in black and white.

Jordan of Saxony was the first to try. Jordan knew him personally, was his successor in office, shared his enthusiasm and his visions, had warmed his heart at the flame of the

founder's love of God. Jordan was a scholar, a gifted writer, a man of deep friendships who knew and understood the heart of his father in Christ. Even his picture is not complete, for Jordan wrote only what he had himself seen or what he considered matter for the record. Jordan has one other distinction we might mention: he is the only one among dozens of biographers who did not borrow anything at all from anyone else.

Other early friars—Peter Ferrandus, Constantine of Orvieto, Theodoric of Apoldia, Bartholomew of Trent, Thomas of Cantimpré, and others—filled in the gaps in Jordan's narrative and clothed it with color and motion. The testimonies of the witnesses at the time of the canonization added other details. By the last half of the thirteenth century, writers were already placidly borrowing great sections of other writers' narratives and re-assembling them for one audience or another. Partly to organize this rapidly expanding body of material, the General Chapter of 1256 appointed Gerard de Frachet to gather and record the growing legends of the founder and the early brethren. Gerard de Frachet did the best he could, and no one has ever been quite satisfied with the result. Humbert de Romanis wrote a stately and sober account, perhaps to offset some of the too colorful popular legends. And at the very end of the pioneer period, the last living witness, Sister Cecilia, dictated her memoirs to a secretary. Sister Cecilia was eighty at the time, yet she recalled with startling clarity the early years and the personal appearance of the founder. Hers is the only detailed description we have of his person, and for many years historians rather ignored it—perhaps because she was a woman in a world of men; more probably because they distrusted the reminiscences of a woman of eighty. They need not have been

so dubious; Cecilia remembered very well those glorious early days at St. Sixtus, when she was seventeen, and the finest efforts of skilled scientists at the examination of 1946 have failed to prove her wrong in any respect.

Writers of the next two centuries did not help matters much; Bernard Gui and, even more so, Alan de la Roche employed the story of St. Dominic as sermon examples which they possibly did not expect anyone to take literally, but their pious little fables and allegories all too quickly dissolved into the genuine history and began to destroy the credibility of all the legends. After the apparition of St. Dominic in Soriano in the early seventeenth century, there was a great revival of devotion. The popular life written in Spanish by Hernando Castillo was quickly translated into many languages; missionaries headed for the Far East took it along with them, and one made a Latin translation while crossing the Pacific. Others soon got it into Chinese and the various languages of the missions. Castillo wrote the first popular "Life" and things would be much simpler for present-day biographers if he had been just a little more critical of the sources he used.

The Dominican Order did develop splendid historians, but they came several centuries too late to stem the tide of legends that had, by the nineteenth century, twined themselves hopelessly around the facts. Fathers Danzas, Denifle, and Mandonnet did monumental work in attempting to get at the sources. Some day, thanks to their patience and their scholarship, we may have a definite life of St. Dominic.

Spearheading the Dominican revival in the mid-nineteenth century was the vivid and gifted preacher, Henri-Dominique Lacordaire. The fire of his zeal spread to a

general conflagration within the Order, and fresh interest was kindled in our beginnings and our holy founder. Lacordaire wrote an impassioned "Memorial to the French People," with a *Life of St. Dominic*, which was the flame needed by a dying spirit. One of the people it inspired was Mother Frances Raphael Drane, a Dominican Sister in Stone, England. Mother Drane has the distinction of writing the first readable life of the Saint in English. Like all her predecessors, she borrowed copiously: from Lacordaire (who was too French for an English audience) and from Castillo (from whom Lacordaire had likewise borrowed). Like Sister Cecilia, she had a woman's eye for details and a daughter's love for her father.

This present book does not attempt to do the impossible, to present an entirely new "Life." All it pretends to do is to present, in a short form, the principal reasons for which St. Dominic's memory is blessed among us. Remarkably few people have done this in English. I have borrowed copiously—in, you must remember, a grand old tradition—from former writers. My debt is greatest to Mother Drane, from whom I have used a great deal; the material on the Albigensian wars, on the first steps in founding the Order, and on the death of St. Dominic are almost verbatim. I have checked the old legends as carefully as present resources allow, in an attempt to discover who has borrowed what from whom. The narrative of Sister Cecilia I have used from Mother Drane's translation. The work of Father Mandonnet, done since Mother Drane's death, has added many new facets to the picture. The viewpoints of Guiraud and Father Jarrett are used where I feel they will clarify an obscure point.

It is a surprising thing that none of the primitive sources except the *Vitae Fratrum* is available in English.

Blessed Jordan's *Life* and the *Acts of Canonization* are particularly enlightening on the pioneer years; so are the *Chronicles* of Blessed Humbert and Galvagnus de la Flamma, and the wonder-filled narratives of Theodoric and Constantine. Perhaps some day these will be made available to English-speaking people.

There are always two ways in which one may judge of a saint's impact on the world. One is, of course, the history of miracles and the record of heroic sanctity which it is the business of the Church to examine with regard to canonization. The other is the lasting quality of the work he did, the "good deed in a naughty world" that shines as a light in the darkness a hundred years after his death, or 700 years, or a thousand. The monument of a saint is built in the holiness of the people who follow his example and in the institutions which he invents for the spread of the kingdom of God. It thus becomes very easy for us in America to judge the work of St. Dominic, although he was born nearly 800 years ago in a world that had never heard of America, as there are more than 25,000 people in this country either wearing his habit or following his rule.

We do not have exact figures on this. One thing about Dominicans that proves frustrating is that they have never been any good at arithmetic. One can get definite figures on the number of priests and laybrothers who form the First Order; the latest list is something over a thousand in the United States. Cloistered nuns of the Second Order account for another thousand. Conventual Third Order sisters, who staff schools and hospitals, and cloistered sisters of the Third Order can also be counted, as the Catholic Directory keeps track of them for us. There are very nearly 13,000 sisters of the Third Order Conventual

in the United States. Besides this, there is a large and growing body of lay tertiaries, some organized into chapters and some living as private tertiaries. One might also distinguish the new chapter of tertiary brothers living in community, an experiment on the pattern of Lacordaire's Third Order priests. In other words, the Order in the United States is so large and so varied that not even its own members are always aware of all of its ramifications.

In view of this, it does not seem sanguine to judge that the time is ripe for a brief *Life of St. Dominic* in English. May it do its part in attracting to the Order fresh recruits from the strata of humanity that Dominic most loved—the young and the courageous who will not shrink from the challenge implicit in St. Dominic's words to Stephen of Spain as he clothed him with the habit of the Friars Preachers: "I give you arms, with which throughout your life you may fight against the devil."

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CHAPTER 1

Foundation Stones

IN the valley of the Duero in the province of Old Castile, in that pleasant part of Spain that lies between Burgos and Segovia, is a simple village called Caleruega. Its one great claim to fame lies in the fact that here, in 1170, St. Dominic was born.

Caleruega today is a dignified ruin in process of restoration, beautiful even in decay, with the fadeless robe of glory that the saints bequeath to their earthly homes. Of the village St. Dominic knew, there remain only the great square tower of the Guzmán palace, stripped now of its battlements, a fountain bearing the family name, and traces of the chapel; little enough when we would like to know so much. At least it suffices to tell us that the family of the Saint was both noble and eminently Christian.

The father of the Saint was Felix Guzmán, commandant of a fortified castle on the border of Christian Spain in the troubled years of the reconquest. His mother was Jane of Aza, a daughter of the old Castilian nobility. The Guzmán home had a claim to distinction besides its splendid heritage of family traditions; it was a household of saints—and not in the rhetorical sense only, for the Church has accorded the honors of the altar both to Jane and to the oldest son, Mannes. A good case might be made out for the beatification of the elder brother, Anthony, who gave his life when caring for the plague-stricken.¹ There must have been at least one other child, probably a girl, since history records a nephew and two

nieces of St. Dominic who were members of the Order he founded.

The future greatness of her son was announced to Jane before his birth by a mysterious vision of a hound who fled through the world igniting everything from a torch he carried in his mouth.² Troubled by a vision she could not understand, Jane went often to pray at the shrine of St. Dominic of Silos in the nearby hills. In gratitude for consolations that she received there, she named her third son after the holy Benedictine abbot to whom the shrine was dedicated. When the baby was presented for baptism in the parish church, a new sign foretold the greatness of his destiny. As the water was poured on his head, his godmother saw a bright star shining on the infant's forehead. All the old "Lives" mention that "a certain splendor" always shone from his face, as though the star were still there.³ Christian art has made use of both of those incidents in representing the Saint: he is nearly always shown with a star above his forehead and is often accompanied by a dog with a torch in its mouth.

Dominic's childhood was passed in a holy household. There are no records of these years, only a wealth of pious legends. Most of these relate different penitential practices which would not seem out of the ordinary in a medieval Spanish home presided over by a mother who was herself a saint. We can judge from the obvious balance and joyousness of the mature Dominic that these early years were happy as well as holy. His most famous daughter, St. Catherine of Siena, was to speak of his "free and joyous spirit." All his life it was to be remarked that he was severe only to himself. To others he was unfailingly kind. It is not unreasonable to suppose that he learned

these things from Jane of Aza while he was still very small.

To his mother we owe at least one tremendous debt of gratitude. It was she who saved this gifted child for the Church. The son of a knight would, ordinarily, look forward to knighthood and a career of arms. Her two older sons were already preparing for the priesthood when Dominic was born. His father's lands and profession would, in the normal course of events, have fallen to him. It speaks well for both the perception of the mother and the generosity of the father that this son, too, would be given uncomplainingly to God.

When Dominic was seven years old, he was sent to Gumiel d'Izan, where his mother's brother was a priest. There the little boy was trained in the early clerical studies which included Latin, logic and the service of the altar. Dominic's life at this time might have been much the same as that of any Catholic boy close to the altar, but Gumiel d'Izan was situated on the pilgrim road that led to the shrine of St. James at Compostela, and the world with all its troubles came streaming past its door. Pilgrims on their way to beg *Sant'Iago* for victory over the Moors, related the horrors they had seen even in Christian Spain; travelers from far away Italy told of the mysterious Tartar hordes, pressing down from the north, pushing at the very borders of Christendom with their weird pagan peoples. The tender-hearted child, listening avidly to the visitors in his uncle's rectory, was both frightened and saddened by their tales. It was probably here at his uncle's fireside that his missionary vocation was born—here where he first heard the cry of the pagan millions who had never heard of God.

At the age of fourteen, Dominic was sent to the Univer-

sity of Palencia, the center of learning for the kingdom of León. Here, we should very much like to know what he did and studied, but no one has recorded it for us.

The only legends we have of Dominic's university years are revealing; they give us a vivid and likeable picture of the man whom post-Reformation literature has presented to us as "the cruel and bloody Dominic." We read that he sold his books for the relief of war refugees who poured into Palencia, homeless and without resources.⁴ Even though most of us today are concerned in one way or another with helping war refugees, it is hard for us to evaluate the sacrifice which this eager student made in selling his books. They were annotated by his own hands—and how very much we should treasure them if only we had them!—irreplaceable, as books at that time had to be copied painstakingly by hand. It was almost a giving up of his university career to lose them, but Dominic's comment on it was typical: "How can I study from dead skins when living men are starving?"⁵

We picture him through the eyes of Theodoric of Apoldia, who was a near contemporary and thus had a good chance to get at the facts: "It was a thing most marvelous and lovely to behold this man, a boy in years but a sage in wisdom; superior to the pleasures of his age, he thirsted only after justice; and not to lose time, he preferred the bosom of his mother the Church to the aimless and objectless life of the foolish world around him. The sacred repose of her tabernacle was his resting place; all his time was divided equally between prayer and study; and God rewarded the fervent love with which he kept His commandments, by bestowing on him such a spirit of wisdom and understanding as made it easy for him to solve the most difficult questions."⁶ Also from this

time is the comment of one who knew him well: "No one ever talked to Dominic without feeling better for it."⁷ This, surely, is not the picture of a brooding religious fanatic, but a heart-warming view of the sort of young man who embodies all that is finest in seminary training. He must have had not only the charm that is always the possession of the young and the pure of heart, but some early flowering of that magnetism that was one day to draw after him the youth of all the world.

Dominicans can best appreciate Theodoric's comment that Dominic wasted no time, that he seemed always in a hurry; it is a heritage he has passed on to all members of the Order!

Nothing more is known of Dominic's university career, but sometime during those years he must have developed the reverence for study that was to be stamped so clearly on his Order. The books which tradition has always asserted were his favorites—the conferences of Cassian, the Gospel of St. Matthew and the Epistles of St. Paul—must have become a part of him then, for never again would he be in a situation where he could study unreservedly.

One author tells us that he was at this time laying plans to found an Order for the redemption of captives similar to that afterwards established by St. John of Matha. It would be quite like him. However, no proof exists, only one more legend to strengthen the picture of a zealous, innocent and compassionate young man with a Christlike desire to save souls.

These peaceful years of growth and development came to an end with Dominic's ordination to the priesthood, probably in 1195.

CHAPTER 2

Call to the Apostolate

IT was not until his twenty-fifth year that Dominic was called to the religious state. Until that time, the special designs of God in his regard had been manifest as a call to the secular priesthood. At the time of his ordination, some important changes took place in the diocese of Osma in which he was resident. His bishop was a man of eminent holiness, one Martin Bazan. Following the plan then active in Europe, he was engaged in changing the canons of his cathedral into Canons Regular, an arrangement by which they became subject to stricter discipline and lived a community life. In this he had been assisted by a man whose name will always hold a peculiar interest for Dominicans, Don Diego de Azevedo, prior of the new community of Canons Regular. The name of Dominic had already been suggested to the two zealous men. His reputation for both learning and holiness determined them to get him into their chapter to help carry on the work of spiritual reform. The implication is that the two superiors recognized his talent as a born "community man"—an idea not always easy to sell to independent clerics—and thought that he would give excellent example in their community. After his ordination, therefore, Dominic received the habit of the Canons Regular of Osma and became a professed member of that body.

Nine years were spent at Osma, during which time God was gradually training the future athlete of Christ by the means offered in the regular life: the choral Office,

the care of souls in city parish work, and the discipline of life under the rule of St. Augustine. Jordan of Saxony has left us a picture of his manner of life at this period: "Now it was that he began to appear among his brethren like a bright burning torch, the first in holiness, the last in humility, spreading about him an odor of life which gave life, and a perfume like the sweetness of summer days. Day and night he was in the church, praying as it were without ceasing. God gave him the grace to weep for sinners and for the afflicted; he bore their sorrows in an inner sanctuary of holy compassion which pressed on his heart, flowed out and escaped in tears. It was his custom to spend the night in prayer, and to speak to God behind closed doors. But often there might be heard the voice of his groans and sighs which burst from him against his will. His one constant petition to God was for the gift of true charity; for he was persuaded that he could not be truly a member of Christ unless he consecrated himself wholly to the work of gaining souls, following the example of Him who sacrificed Himself without reserve for our redemption." ⁸

It is quite possible that Dominic might have intended to remain a canon of the cathedral of Osma for a lifetime of hidden holiness, but the long preparation for God's work came to an end when he was summoned to accompany the bishop on a diplomatic journey. Don Diego, who had succeeded to the bishopric of Osma in 1201, was sent two years later by the King of Castile to arrange a marriage for his son with a princess of "the Marches"—possibly Denmark. In making up his retinue, Bishop Diego thought first of the zealous young priest who had brightened the cloisters of Osma, and requested him to go with him, probably in the capacity of secretary. It was Dominic's

first trip outside of Catholic Spain and his first sight of a country ravaged by heresy. It was a journey fraught with destiny both for Dominic and for the world.

As they passed through the south of France, the frightful character and extent of the Albigensian heresy which then infected the whole of the southern provinces first came under their notice. Upon their arrival at Toulouse, where they meant to stop but one night, Dominic discovered that their host was a heretic. Although their time was short, he was unwilling to go away without doing something for the soul of the innkeeper.⁹ Being a man of action as well as one of prayer, he promptly engaged the man in argument and continued all night with his exposition of Catholic truth. Before their early departure in the morning, he had the joy of seeing the innkeeper renounce his errors and pledge his belief in the truth. Dominic, moved by this conquest and by the sad knowledge that there were thousands of others who shared the innkeeper's ignorance, began to dream of some religious body consecrated to the defense of the Church and the exposition of truth.

Since historians themselves do not agree as to the exact destination of this embassy, one may at least repeat, for what it is worth, a legend given by Castillo in his history of St. Dominic.¹⁰ He tells us that the embassy in which Bishop Diego and Dominic were employed was not to Denmark, but to the court of France, and that it was on this occasion that, finding Queen Blanche in much affliction because she was without children, Dominic recommended to her the prayer of the Rosary. The queen, he adds, not only adopted the devotion herself, but propagated it among her people, asking them to join their prayers to hers that her desire might be granted, and the son whom

God gave in answer to these prayers was St. Louis. This is the first mention of the devotion of the Rosary which we find in the various "Lives." It is probable from the date of St. Louis' birth (1215) that the circumstances referred to, if they ever really took place, occurred at some later visit to the French court. But though there is evidently some confusion in the time, we do not like to abandon the story entirely. There is always a peculiar charm in all that links the saints together, and Dominicans would be particularly happy in thinking of St. Louis as a child of the Rosary.

All that is definitely known about this mission is that it was successful, but that the princess died before the marriage could be solemnized. Perhaps the little princess, who died without leaving her name to the historians, played her most important role in leading a future apostle to lift up his eyes and see the countries white for the harvest. Certainly what the bishop and his young secretary saw on this journey did change the course of history.

We do not know, though we wish we *did* know, the steps that led these two men, contemplative by nature, into the active apostolate. We are told that as soon as they were free from their diplomatic charge, they determined to visit Rome on pilgrimage before returning to Spain. There must have been several reasons for undertaking this journey, but with Bishop Diego the most powerful one was the desire to obtain permission from Pope Innocent III to resign his bishopric and go as a missionary to the Tartars.¹¹ It is impossible now to determine whose idea exactly it was, Diego's or Dominic's; doubtless they discussed it often and were in sympathy with each other's motives. Of Bishop Diego, Lacordaire writes: "For six

centuries has the Spaniard Don Diego de Azevedo reposed under a stone which I have not ever seen, and notwithstanding, I am unable to pronounce his name without a reverential emotion; for he was the agent chosen by God to enlighten and guide the patriarch of a dynasty whose child I am. As I retrace the long chain of my spiritual ancestors, I meet with him between St. Dominic and Jesus Christ." ¹² It would seem as if the impressions made on the minds of these two great men by the sufferings of the Church in their journey through Europe had kindled in them a quenchless flame of charity which would not be satisfied until they had given themselves, not to one diocese, but to world conquest.

The state of the Church at that time was one which might well make such an appeal to hearts ready to receive it. While hordes of savage and heathen enemies menaced the borders of Christendom and watered the ground with the blood of unnumbered martyrs, heresy gnawed from within the fold. During this memorable year, Diego and Dominic had in some degree been eye-witnesses of both these evils. We know in what manner they had been thrown among the Albigensians of France, and it is at least probable that in the course of their Danish journey they had seen some of the troubles of north and central Europe. Possible Tartary (which at that time included Russia and Manchuria) seemed the neediest mission; at any rate, when they presented their petitions to the Pope, it was to Tartary that they asked to go. Pope Innocent refused. Accordingly, after they had paid a devotional visit to Rome, they made plans to return to Spain.

They had come to Rome as pilgrims and quite probably, after the fashion of all pilgrims, they visited all the shrines along their way. On their journey home they took a

brief detour to visit St. Bernard's Abbey of Citeaux, then one of the most famous in Europe.¹³ Here Bishop Diego felt himself called to take the Cistercian habit. He would very willingly have remained at Citeaux, where peace and prayer held such charm for one of a contemplative spirit, but he was under obedience to return to his own diocese. So, after obtaining several of the monks to accompany him, they set out once again and soon arrived at Montpellier.

Here the will of God awaited them. The inspirations which both had felt, yet had not fully understood, had truly been the whisperings of the divine voice. Dimly feeling in the dark, in obedience to the hand that was beckoning them, they had visualized a martyr's crown among the Cumans or a monk's cowl at Citeaux, and both had been false guesses as to what that whisper meant. This feature in what we might call the vocation of St. Dominic is worthy of notice. His call was not sudden, or miraculous, or even extraordinary; it was a gradual unfolding of the will of God in his behalf. He was always being led forward, not always knowing where. As sub-prior of Osma, he probably saw nothing before him but the ordinary community life of the cathedral chapter. The journey to Denmark helped to further the designs of God when it brought him into the presence of heresy which it was his destiny to destroy. Though we have reason to believe that from the time of his first contact with the Albigensians, he had the idea of some future apostolate of preaching, it is evident that he had no clear idea how it was to be accomplished. He might have been a nameless missionary among the Tartars but for the command of the Pope. He was on the road back to his old home, preparing to take up again the same life and

duties which had been interrupted for two years. The new thoughts and hopes were now, as it seemed, to be forever abandoned. Then, after he had made what was probably a painful sacrifice, the mysterious orders of providence had prepared for him at Montpellier a combination of events which would make his vocation clear.

The alarming progress and character of the Albigensian heresy had finally determined the Pope on active measures for its suppression. A commission had been appointed for that purpose, the most distinguished members of which were the papal legates, Arnold of Citeaux and Peter of Castelnau. They were Cistercians and their retinue contained many more of the same Order, to which the preaching against the heresy had been confided for some years. They found their task a difficult one, for the country was entirely in the power of the heretic, Count Raymond of Toulouse. The local bishops and clergy, by their irregularities and lack of understanding, assisted the heretics more than they fought them. Innocent III, in a letter to the legates, speaks sadly in these words: "The pastor has become a hireling; he no longer feeds the flock, but himself; wolves enter the fold and he is not there to oppose himself as a wall against the enemies of God's house." This scandal, of course, delighted the heretics. They had only to quote the Gospel, "By their fruits you shall know them," and the clergy stood condemned. Baffled and confounded, the Cistercians had met with other Catholic leaders to consult together in the neighborhood of Montpellier. It was while discussing the gloomy prospects that they heard of the arrival of Diego and Dominic, whose reputation had come before them. They sent in haste to ask the two travelers to join them in their discussions.

The chief difficulty in the way of converting the heretics was the impossibility of convincing them that the truth of the Christian faith depended on the infallible word of God and not on the good or bad example of individuals. For neither the first nor the last time in history, the tragic gap between theory and practice caused embarrassment to the Church of God. Bishop Diego inquired about the preaching methods of the commission and the mode of life they had adopted. "He remarked (this from Blessed Jordan) that the heretics attracted men by persuasive means, by preaching and a great outward show of sanctity, while the legates were surrounded by a numerous suite of followers, with horses and rich apparel. Then he said, 'It is not thus, my brothers, that you must act. The heretics seduce simple souls with the appearances of poverty and austerity; by presenting to them the contrary spectacle you will scarcely edify them. You may destroy them, but you will never touch their hearts.' " ¹⁴

The words of Diego were not exactly what the legates had been expecting; furthermore, it would prove uncomfortable to carry out his advice. None of them wished to be first to adopt what seemed to them a radical suggestion, but Bishop Diego set the pace by dismissing his entire retinue, keeping with him only Dominic. The legates complied with the new system, sending away followers and baggage and retaining only their books. Furthermore, they unanimously elected Bishop Diego as leader of the Catholic delegation and sent post-haste to Rome for the Pope's permission. Innocent III, having refused the two Spaniards permission to go to Tartary, willingly authorized their mission in France.

As Lacordaire expresses it: "With what art and patience had not God worked out this consolation! On the banks

of a Spanish river two men of different age received the plenitude of the Divine Spirit. After a long friendship had blended their days and thoughts, an unforeseen dispensation draws them from their own country, carries them through Europe, across the Pyrenees, over the Baltic Sea, and from the Tiber to the hills of Burgundy, which they reach in ignorance of their destiny, just in time to impart to disheartened men a counsel which is to change the face of things to save the honor of the Church, and prepare for her legions of apostles at no distant future." ¹⁵

CHAPTER 3

Signadou

UP to this time, Dominic's part in the work against the heretics was a secondary one. He appears rather as the follower and companion of the Bishop of Osma than as the man whose name was to be forever remembered in this struggle for the faith. Probably very few of those who witnessed the opening of the campaign against the Albigensians would have believed that the award of deathless fame was to fall, not to the bishop, but to one who followed in his train and was known only as Brother Dominic. However, as soon as the formal disputes with the heretics began, his power and value began to emerge. Perhaps the best evidence of this was the hatred which the heretics had for him. The legate, Peter of Castelnau, had withdrawn temporarily from the mission because of the hatred of the heretics. The masterly arguments and the charming eloquence of Dominic, which time after time silenced his adversaries, excited an equal hatred of him. They spoke of him as their most dangerous enemy, a strange charge to make against a young priest who had no ecclesiastical authority. Dominic regarded this vindictiveness with an almost complete indifference; he might almost have been too busy to care what people were saying.

Among the conferences held at this time, that of Fanjeaux was the most important, both because of the preparations made by both sides and the extraordinary nature of its termination. It would seem that the here-

tics had appealed to a final arbitration of their differences and that the Catholic leaders not only responded to the challenge but also accepted judges who were favorable to the heretics. Each side had put in writing the strongest defense of its case; the brief of the Catholic case was the work of Dominic. Having read both cases and being unwilling to make a decision, the judges demanded a trial by fire, a method often used at that time. "Accordingly a great fire was lighted (says Blessed Jordan) and the two volumes were cast therein. That of the heretics was immediately reduced to ashes; the other, which had been written by the blessed man of God, Dominic, not only remained unhurt, but was thrown out of the flames in the presence of the whole assembly. Again a second and a third time they threw it into the fire, and each time the same result clearly manifested which was the truth and the holiness of him who had written this book." ¹⁶ The parish church at Fanjeaux still reverently treasures the charred beam on which the book fell during this strange trial.

A similar prodigy took place at Montreal in the diocese of Caracassonne under different circumstances. Dominic had, in preparing one of his public disputations, written down on a sheet of paper some quotations from the holy Scriptures which he had used in the course of his argument. He gave the paper to one of the heretics, telling him to read the quotations and consider them well. The same evening, as the man sat by the fire with some of his companions, they fell to discussing the disputation. He drew out the paper and proposed submitting it to the flames as a test of the truth of its contents. They consented, and thrusting it into the fire, kept it there for some time. When they drew it out, it showed no signs of burning.

They tried again and again to burn it but could not succeed. "Then," says Castillo, "the heretics were filled with great wonder and, instead of keeping the promise they had made of believing the truths preached by the Catholics, agreed to keep the prodigy a close secret, lest it should reach the ears of the Catholics, who would be certain to claim it as a sign of victory." ¹⁷ Unfortunately, many of the people were stubborn and refused to be convinced. One historian says: "A few of the heretics were converted to the truth of our holy faith, but as to the rest, it produced no effect."

There is little doubt that the Albigenian heresy, besides its corruption of faith and its frightful immorality, had a directly political character. It was mixed up with a spirit of revolution and sedition, which partially explains the bitterness of the civil wars which it occasioned. Like all revolutionary movements, it had a disorganizing effect on all social ties, so that the south of France was plunged by it into a state of civil anarchy. One of the consequences of these political upheavals was the impoverishment of many noble families involved in them. This often led to Catholics' concealing their faith through the pressure of necessity, and suffering their children to be educated by the heretics. Dominic had noticed that one cause of the progress of heresy was the ease with which the heretics got into their possession young girls of quality whose families were too poor to educate them according to their rank. He deliberated on the best means of offsetting this evil and decided to establish a convent for the education of those Catholic girls whose birth and poverty exposed them to the seductions of error.

There is a sinister implication in this whole question, and much obscurity. Father Marchese implies that the

young girls were "sold" into the custody of the heretics; certainly by the available records, many of them were very young when they began their indoctrination into error, much too young to have chosen for themselves. By an association of women skilled in weaving—for which this area was famous—the heretic leaders kept up communication between the houses of their belief. The whole thing was well-organized, and so effective that one wonders if Dominic, looking sad-hearted upon this terrible leakage from the Church, did not see this very organization as a weapon with which he might fight. Catholics, right in their beliefs but lacking any organization, could not work against this efficient system. Very well, then; if system was needed, he would organize the Catholics.

In Prouille, a village on the plain between Fanjeaux and Montreal at the foot of the Pyrenees, stood a church dedicated to the Holy Virgin. Dominic, who loved every Lady-shrine, was peculiarly attached to Our Lady of Prouille. He had often prayed there during his apostolic journeyings. One night, as he knelt in prayer on the heights of Fanjeaux, looking down on the sleeping plain with its shadowy outline of the tower of our Lady's shrine, he saw a globe of fire descend from the sky and come to rest over the little chapel. He took it as a sign from God—the *Signadou*—that he was to begin his work at the church of St. Mary of Prouille.¹⁸

It was here, then, that he established his first convent. The bishop immediately granted it lands and revenues which went far to relieve him of financial worries about its future. The Catholic nobles, with Simon de Montfort in the lead, gave prompt and liberal aid, that the church and convent might be made ready for its new occupants.

Dominic's first sisterhood consisted of nine women, converted from heresy by his preaching. There are various accounts of the conversion of these women, ranging from a simple statement of fact to a highly colorful tale of a hideous beast, "a species of cat" according to one account, which showed itself to them when they were about to leave the fold of the heretics and follow Dominic. Other accounts tell us that the Saint went boldly into the very bosom of heresy by visiting a hospice where the women were trained for their work of indoctrinating children in error, and that he converted them then and there.¹⁹ At this distance it is not possible to tell from the available documents exactly where he met them, or what their position was among the Catharists. We do at least know their names, and all the accounts agree that the nine women came to St. Dominic asking for a refuge from their families; that he placed them at St. Mary of Prouille and put a Catholic noblewoman, Guillemette of Fanjeaux, in charge.²⁰

The community took possession of its new home on December 27, 1206. Of the rule given them by the founder, we know nothing except that it bound them to the education of young women imperilled by heresy, and to certain manual labor such as spinning. They were to pray continually for the work of the preaching brothers of Master Dominic, and they were cloistered. The habit they wore was of white wool, with a black veil and a mantle of "tawny" or unbleached wool. They probably shared in the provision which the brethren made against the chill of midnight office, by having a winter tunic with a fleece or fur lining. (The brethren were cautioned against using ermine for this purpose!) The history of

the monastery of Prouille is not too clear on any of these points, and the brethren did not, of course, concern themselves with what the nuns wore.

Father Jarrett has an interesting theory on this foundation, and good evidence to back it up. He says: "It is clear that St. Dominic had founded not only a convent of nuns, but also a priory of his friars; he had, no doubt quite consciously, established a 'double monastery' as it was called . . . where dwelt side by side the preachers and the nuns, each with their separate establishment, yet joined in one common life. The prior had to maintain the rights of the two communities, keep their deeds and the bequests, preside over the mixed council of friars and sisters, sign all contracts for sale, and appoint jointly with the prioress all the presentations to the various benefices granted to the convent, subject, of course, to the approval of the bishop of the diocese. Directly, the prior had control over his own religious; indirectly, he had to supervise the observance of the nuns. He could not hold a chapter of the sisters without special permission, nor could he give dispensations already refused by the prioress." ²¹

Regarding this foundation, Father Mandonnet advances the theory that Prouille was the work of Bishop Diego and that it was intended to be a Cistercian house. Dominic, after all, had no security to offer a group of sisters at this time, and even with the generous revenues given them by the bishop, they were much at the mercy of circumstances. Father Mandonnet says: "The house for the sisters was founded within the precincts of the great Cistercian mission. During that period, Dominic kept in close contact with the Order of Citeaux. . . . Moreover, the rule of Prouille was thoroughly Cistercian. Taegio mentions

also a tradition saying that the first sisters were vested in the habit of the Order of Cîteaux. Hence it is possible that at the outset, and particularly when the monastic buildings were under construction (1212-13), Dominic cherished the plan of confiding to the Order of St. Bernard the convent of nuns which was already following Cistercian observance. At that time the friars did not yet exist; if Dominic were to disappear in this arena of battles, what would become of the monastery? It was but natural to affiliate it to the Order of Cîteaux, which in the early thirteenth century was the great and practically the only educator of nuns.”²²

It will be observed that these views, to a certain extent, contradict each other, unless they are speaking of Prouille at different times. We have not the slightest doubt that Prouille *was* a Dominican house, but the records as to when it became one are frustratingly vague.

Bishop Diego saw the foundation of Prouille before returning to his diocese. He had now been two years in the French provinces, and he felt it was time to return to his own people.²³ He left the country in which he had labored so zealously, with the promise to bring help from Spain when he came back. He was never to return to fulfill his promise, for he died shortly after reaching his diocese. He was the first of a long line of great men with whom the founder of the Friars Preachers was united in friendship. So holy and stainless was the life he led that even the heretics said of him that “it was impossible not to believe such a man predestined to eternal life, and that doubtless he was sent among them to be taught the true doctrine.” It was his influence that had consolidated the weak and scattered elements of the Catholic party into a united body.

Scarcely had the report of the death of Diego de Azevedo crossed the Pyrenees, when the heroic work whose elements he had assembled fell to pieces. The abbots and the religious of Citeaux were soon on the road to their monasteries. Even the Spaniards whom the bishop had left under the direction of Dominic returned to Spain. One of the legates had died. Of a large and flourishing mission band, only one man remained, a young foreigner with no jurisdiction, who could not all at once succeed to the place of Bishop Diego. All that Dominic could do was to bear up against the terrible weight of this loss and remain firm under the privation of such a friend. As he watched the other missionaries depart, he remained, lonely but unshaken, in the post where God had placed him. The consolation of an understanding friend was gone, and Dominic was a man to whom friends were very dear; but the will of God was clear and he remained in the work, perhaps for the future strengthening of his children who would have to carry on in similar circumstances.

In the place of Bishop Diego stepped a remarkable character whose influence would mean much to Dominic. He was Foulques, Bishop of Toulouse. He was no stranger to Dominic nor to the problems faced in his diocese. He was in every way a remarkable man, one in whom the energy of human passion had been, not laid aside, but transformed and sanctified by the influence of grace. As a young man he had been known to the world as a brilliant courtier, a troubadour of no mean reputation, the very embodiment of the Provençal character. After a period of bitter conflict and spiritual insight, Provence had lost her gayest troubadour and Foulques was a monk in the abbey of Citeaux. In 1206 he was raised to the bishopric of Toulouse. He brought to his diocese and to

the Catholic cause all the energy of a vigorous nature. This was of tremendous value to the mission of Dominic, who had so often to contend with prelates and clerics who lacked the courage of their convictions. His help and benefactions were very much needed in the ten years of the French mission when Dominic was so much alone.

"When they had heard of the departure of the Bishop of Osma, some of the others who had remained in the region of Toulouse for the purpose of preaching returned home. Brother Dominic remained alone with a few followers, continuing to preach with untiring zeal. Although some did continue to follow him, they were not, however, held to him by any tie of profession of vow." ²⁴

There is no real evidence that Dominic was connected in any way with the Albigensian crusade other than in the peaceful role of preacher. The fact is that we know almost nothing of his life during this period except that he preached and got very little reward for his labors. Some few legends come to us from this time but there is no definite evidence of his connection with the armed crusade until the death of Peter of Castelnau.

It will be remembered that among the legates and missionaries when Dominic and Diego met at Montpellier, mention was made of Peter of Castelnau, against whom the hatred of the heretics had been so violent that he was forced for a while to withdraw from the mission. Something of the severity and harshness of his character may account for the particular hatred of which he was the object. He had often been heard to say that religion would never raise its head in Languedoc until it was watered by the blood of a martyr, and his constant prayer was that he would be the victim. His prayer was answered in a violent way after he excommunicated Count Raymond of Tou-

louse. Raymond had broken every promise he made, and Peter, for a violent man, had been exceedingly patient. When the excommunication was finally pronounced, two members of Count Raymond's household ambushed and killed the legate in the early morning hours of January 15, 1208. He who had proved to be not a tactful missionary was a saint in his dying. His last words were of forgiveness for his murderers and encouragement to those who still must carry on this dangerous work. When the news of his murder reached the ears of the Pope and the Catholic rulers of Europe, it was the alarm bell for open war.

It seemed that the time for preaching was past and that Christian men should take up arms against what was in effect a gangster regime throughout the whole of southern France. It was not only theological errors but armed banditry with which the Church had to contend. Dominic, man of peace, had fought the good fight with spiritual weapons; now, with "churches burned and ruined to their foundations and . . . the dwellings of men changed into the dens of beasts," it was the signal to material arms. Although Dominic continued as chaplain to the Catholic troops, he had no more to do with the actual battle than any other chaplain, and it is only the irony of fate that he should have been tagged in history as the leader of a bloody crusade.

CHAPTER 4

The Albigensian Wars

AS soon as the news of the death of Peter of Castelnau reached Pope Innocent III, he addressed letters to the Kings of France and England and to the nobles of France, calling on them to lay aside their private quarrels and join in a united effort against "the rage of heresy." The crime of the Count of Toulouse was declared to be one which freed his subjects from their allegiance to him until he himself would return to the obedience of the Church. Under the leadership of Simon de Montfort, the Catholic nobles drew up their forces and prepared to fight for the rights of the Church. A new commission of bishops and abbots was appointed to preach a crusade and undertake the ecclesiastical government of the country.

In this commission Dominic's name does not appear. Arnold of Citeaux is the man charged with the chief burden of the whole undertaking, and his fiery and inflexible temper caused him to fulfill his charge with unrelenting severity. For more than a year after the war first broke out, Arnold was the leader and director of the Catholic forces, and the unfortunate scheme of setting the houses of Montfort and Toulouse against each other, in order to destroy the latter by means of a personal quarrel, was his invention.

Yet this man who played the conspicuous part in the history of his time is almost forgotten by biased historians. Probably in his own day, Dominic Guzmán was a very insignificant person compared to the legate, Arnold of

Citeaux. Yet so strange is human prejudice that few historians can bear to pass by the Albigenian war without assuring us that it was "preached by the infamous Dominic," with other expressions which would give us to understand that he was the foremost character in the whole affair. If this were true, it is difficult to understand why there is so little trace of him in the transactions of the period.

Where was Dominic all this time? Some of his chroniclers give the year 1207 as the date of the foundation of his Order because it was then that he took command of the little band of missionaries who remained with him after the death of Diego de Azevedo.²⁵ They were known by the name of the "preaching brothers." However, they were bound to him by no other tie than a common interest. Even though they lived together in a kind of community life, they could not have had at this time any of the formation of a regular religious body; perhaps no plan for such a formation had yet been clearly developed even in Dominic's own mind. Of their manner of life we can form some notion from those scattered anecdotes which are all that are left to us.

Even in the most desperate period of the war their life was the same as it had been in Bishop Diego's time; they went about barefoot from village to village preaching the faith. The only commission which Dominic held was the original one he possessed in virtue of the first legation with which he and the Bishop of Osma had been associated before the crusade began. It gave him the power of reconciling the heretics and of receiving them to penance, an office which has earned him the title of the "First Inquisitor."²⁶ If by this is meant that the office of the inquisition, as afterwards constituted, was established at

this time, such a title is certainly a mistake. No such office existed before the Lateran Council of 1215, and it was not until 1230, nine years after the death of Dominic, that the Council of Toulouse gave it a new form and entrusted a large share of its government to the Friars Preachers. The first commission for denouncing heretics to the civil magistrate was granted, not to the Dominicans, but to the Cistercians.

Dominic at this time resided at Fanjeaux and Carcassonne; he was afterwards to refer to himself as "the parish priest of Fanjeaux."²⁷ There is little doubt that he chose Fanjeaux because it was close to Our Lady of Prouille. He used to walk the 17 miles to Carcassonne along a route that can be followed today, where one can see the well where he used to pause for a drink of water on this dusty journey.

The people of Carcassonne were unkind to him and deaf to his preaching. It was their diversion to treat the humble friar as a fool; they would follow him, throwing dirt at him, mocking him with their laughter. He never seemed disturbed by this, though it must have been disheartening. He knew the Scripture too well to be surprised by such treatment. Sometimes the insults were accompanied with threats of death. "I am not worthy of martyrdom," was the only answer they were able to draw from him. He was warned once that a party of heretics lay in ambush in a certain place waiting to assassinate him. Instead of avoiding the place or trying to get past without being seen, he went cheerfully by in plain sight, singing hymns at the top of his voice. Either this disconcerted the heretics or they had not the courage to kill him; they let him go. Some days later they met him and one of them said, "So you are not afraid to die? What would you have done if you had fallen

into our hands?" Dominic answered, "I would have asked you not to have killed me at a single blow, but little by little . . . to prolong my torments and gain me a richer crown." ²⁸ It is said that this reply so confounded his enemies that for some time afterwards they left him alone, being convinced that to persecute this man was to give him exactly what he wanted. Today the place is marked by a stone cross, called "the cross of the assassins."

On another occasion a great conference was to be held with the heretics and one of the neighboring bishops was to attend. He came with great pomp, to the distress of Dominic. "Then the humble herald of God spoke to him and said, 'My father, it is not thus that we must act against this proud generation. The enemies of the truth must be convinced by the example of humility and patience rather than by the pomp and grandeur of worldly show. Let us arm ourselves with prayer and humility and so let us go barefooted against these Goliaths.' " ²⁹ The bishop took the suggestion and they all took off their shoes and went to meet the heretics, singing psalms on the way. As they were not sure of the road, they inquired of a passerby, a man whom they believed to be a Catholic but who was actually a bitter heretic. By design he led them through a thorny wood where the rough stones and briars tore their naked feet and caused them to dye the ground with their blood. This form of penance was nothing new to Dominic, but it must have been rather hard on the bishop and his suite. Dominic encouraged them, and so outstanding was his patience that the heretic had a complete change of heart and abjured his heresy.

There are few anecdotes told of this time, but there is one regarding a band of English pilgrims which has interest for us, both for itself as a charming legend and

because it shows the compassion which moved the Blessed Dominic to action.³⁰ In 1211, just after open hostility had broken out around Toulouse, Dominic's apostolic wanderings led him to the bank of the river Garonne. While he was there, the band of pilgrims, about forty in number, arrived at the same place. They were bound for the shrine of St. James of Compostela, and in order to avoid the town which was under papal interdict, they took a boat to cross the river. The boat was small and overloaded, and soon overturned, throwing the pilgrims into the river. Dominic was praying in a small church nearby, but the cries of the soldiers who had seen the accident roused him. He went at once to the river bank to find that most of the pilgrims were already out of sight. He prostrated himself in prayer, then rose and called out in a ringing voice, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come to the shore alive and unhurt!" Instantly the drowning pilgrims rose to the surface and with the help of the soldiers all were rescued.

During this same period of apostolic work in Languedoc, we hear of him accidentally dropping his books into the river as he forded it on foot. Three days later the books were recovered by a fisherman and found to be perfectly dry and uninjured.³¹ More typical of the hard-hearted people is the boatman who appears briefly in another legend of the time. After taking Dominic across the river, he demanded his pay for the ride. Dominic had no money and explained to him that God would pay him.³² The boatman, annoyed, laid hold of the preacher's cloak saying, "You will either leave your cloak with me or pay me my money!" Dominic prayed silently, then pointed out a piece of silver that lay on the ground. "My brother, there is what you ask. Take it and let me go my way."

We read also that after an evening spent in disputing with the heretics, Dominic left the place of conference in company with a Cistercian monk and desired to retire into a neighboring church in order to spend the remainder of the night in prayer. They found the doors locked and were obliged to kneel outside. Hardly had they knelt than, without being able to say how, they found themselves before the high altar inside the church.³³ They remained here until break of day and when they were discovered by the people, great numbers of sick and infirm were brought to them to be healed. Among these were several possessed persons whom the holy Father was entreated to restore by his touch.

From this time dates the tradition of the church of Our Lady of Peyragude. According to legend, it was while St. Dominic was on a pilgrimage to this church that Simon de Montfort came in the year 1212 to ask him to act as negotiator with Raymond. Dominic went as requested with the conditions of the truce, but Raymond refused. So rudely did they treat the Saint that after the war was over, it was thought wise to build a chapel of reparation, which is still to be seen at Peyragude.

We have given a few anecdotes of the life led by Dominic during a time when war and bloodshed were raging around him. They are all that are left us to mark his course for many years. It was during this time, though it is now impossible to tell the exact date, that he first began to preach the devotion of the Rosary. Tradition affirms that the Blessed Virgin herself revealed to him the combination of mental and vocal prayer which we know as the Rosary. There are several theories regarding the place of this vision. One tradition holds that it occurred in the sanctuary of Our Lady of Prouille; another, that it was

the sanctuary of Notre Dame de Dreche, near Albi. There are probably a great number of reasons why the exact details of this have never been known; one lies in the character of Dominic, a man so humble that most of his tremendous gifts would have remained unknown to the world had not someone else told the story. Secondly, what we might call the devout indifference of the Dominican Order towards written records has made the preservation of any sort of documentary evidence more miraculous than commonplace.

The Rosary was not altogether a new devotion. There was nothing novel in the frequent repetition of the *Hail Mary* or the *Our Father*; such devotion had been common in the Church from time immemorial, and we read of the hermits of the desert counting prayers with little stones in the same way that today we use beads. It is not even necessarily a Christian device; the Buddhists, for example, use a rosary that looks quite like our own. The novelty, and the aspect of this devotion which has linked it closely with St. Dominic, is its association of mental and vocal prayer. It is a tempting theory that this combination was worked out by St. Dominic in connection with his preaching, so that when his hearers returned home and said their Rosary in private, the mention of the mystery would bring back to them the text of the sermon. There is a development of sermons and litanies in connection with the Rosary in Ireland which also offers great food for thought when one remembers that the Dominicans came to Ireland within a few years after St. Dominic's death. However, one may hold many theories, for or against, and not change the fact that tradition has for seven centuries associated the Rosary with St. Dominic.

Since legends assure us that the soldiers of the Count de

Montfort said the Rosary on the eve of the Battle of Muret, which took place in 1213, one may infer that somehow and somewhere it had got its start by that time. Some of the early anecdotes about the Rosary have the simplicity of children's stories; they tell us of people—bishops and noble ladies and monks and ordinary folks—who for one reason or another did not take kindly to the new devotion. One had a vision in which he saw himself being drawn up out of a pit by means of the Rosary; another saw a star take its place in the sky as each *Ave* was uttered; another saw roses laid at our Lady's feet. On the face of it, these would seem to be the anecdotes used in popular sermons rather than seriously considered incidents with place in time. However, they played their part both in spreading the devotion at that time and in giving us a glimpse of the popular mind with which St. Dominic was working. Whatever else the Rosary has proved to be in succeeding centuries, it was the weapon par excellence for battling the principal dogmas of the Albigenses; to their unnatural hatred of life it opposed the story of Christ born of our flesh, living our life, dying for us. Perhaps the mysteries in use at that time (we have no assurance that they were the same as the fifteen we now use) were chosen to combat definite errors, or even varied to suit the season or the occasion. There is evidence that this was done, and it fits so strongly into the personality of Dominic that it adds a formidable argument to the tradition.

Dominic was holding the position of vicar to the Bishop of Carcassonne when his affairs and the course of the Albigensian Crusade were altered by the arrival of the King of Aragon with a large army. Peter of Aragon joined with the forces of the heretics and the Catholic armies were in perilous straits. It was decided to hold a

council at Muret. Dominic made his way there and one of the few anecdotes we have concerning this period occurred on this journey at the city of Castres.³⁴ Here he had stopped to venerate the martyr St. Vincent and planned to lodge with the collegiate canons of Castres. When he did not appear for dinner, the prior sent one of the brothers to call him. The brother obeyed, but on going into the church he saw Dominic raised in the air in ecstasy before the altar. Not daring to disturb him, he returned and called the prior. So forceful was the impression of Dominic's sanctity left on the prior's mind, that shortly after this he joined him and was one of the first disciples of the Order. He was the celebrated Matthew of France.

Dominic proceeded to Muret, and on September 10 of the same year the King of Aragon suddenly appeared before the walls of the city with an army of forty thousand men. The move took de Montfort by surprise; he was an able warrior and there is no other explanation for his being caught with such a small force. Hastily calling the bishop, he made an attempt to arrange a truce. Battle being inevitable, he prepared for death and determined to sell the city dearly.

If the tradition is correct that the crusaders ascribed their victory to the assistance of Mary, whom they had invoked in the Rosary, we may well believe that it was at the suggestion of Dominic that they prayed. The defenders were only eight hundred; they could well afford to pray. As the Bishop gave the last blessing, de Montfort knelt before him, clad in armor, and made his vow: "I consecrate my blood and life for God and His faith." With the last blessing of the Bishop of Toulouse, the men rode out to battle and the priests went into the church to pray. Whatever may be said against de Montfort regarding his politics

or his intrigues, the battle of Muret proves that he was brave and resourceful in battle. His troops made a single charge; riding through the open gates, they first feigned a movement of retreat, then suddenly turned and dashed into the ranks of their opponents. The violence of their attack carried them through the lines to the center of the opposing army where Peter of Aragon sat among his nobles. Demoralized, the army fled, leaving the king dead on the field. Victory, improbable though it seemed, was theirs.

Where was Dominic meanwhile and what place has this page of chivalry in the annals of his apostolic life? The flash of swords and the tramp of those galloping steeds startle us, so different is their mood from the story of his quiet lonely journeys over the mountains. Where are we to look for him at Muret? Prejudiced writers are ready enough to tell us he was at the head of the crusaders carrying a crucifix and urging the men on to slaughter. The plain truth of the matter is, however, that nothing in his training could have fitted him to be the leader of a cavalry charge whose equal is scarcely to be found in history. The Battle of Muret does form part of the story of Dominic's life; for a brief moment he was brought into contact with the stormy scenes of the crusade. But to find his place, we must leave the battlefield and go back to the church of Muret with the other priests and the women. They had sent their comrades as it seemed to certain death, and their prayer had in it the anguish of supplication. Prostrate on the pavement, they poured out their souls to God, beseeching Him to defend His servants who were exposed to death for His sake. We need scarcely be surprised that so wonderful a victory was

looked upon as miraculous and counted as the fruit of prayer. De Montfort himself regarded it so.

The battle of Muret was a desperate blow to the cause of Raymond. Very shortly after, Toulouse opened its gates to de Montfort.

CHAPTER 5

Brother Dominic, Preacher

DOMINIC was in his forty-sixth year when the work for which he had been so long prepared began at last to take definite shape. The two men who were to help to accomplish his work awaited him in Toulouse; they were Peter Seila and Thomas, wealthy citizens of that city.³⁵ When the victorious crusaders entered the city, the two men placed themselves and all they possessed at the disposal of Dominic. Peter Seila offered his own house for the use of Dominic and the six companions whom he had drawn into the apostolate. In after years, Peter was accustomed to say that he had not been received into the Order but had rather received the Order into his house.

Dominic invested his companions with the habit which he wore himself, that is to say, a tunic of white wool, a surplice of linen, a mantle and hood of black, which comprised the dress of the Canons Regular.³⁶ Also, according to the usage of the canons, they adopted a life of poverty and prayer in common under rules of religious discipline. This alone did not satisfy the aspirations of Dominic. His first design was the salvation of souls by means of preaching the divine word. We may assume that the whole pattern of the Dominican Order had by now become quite clear in the mind of Dominic, although it would be some time yet before it could be carried out completely. That this was so, we can judge by his actions after assembling his companions, for as soon as he had set up the program of prayer and common life, he devoted

himself to a program of studies. Blessed Humbert was later to write: "Study is not the purpose of the Order, but it is of supreme necessity for the prescribed end, namely, preaching and work for the salvation of souls, because we could do neither without study." ³⁷

A celebrated doctor of theology, Alexander Stavensby, was then in Toulouse. One morning very early, being engaged in study, he fell asleep over his books and had a dream which seemed prophetic. He seemed to see before him seven stars, very small at first, but growing brighter as he looked at them. He woke wondering what the dream could mean. At lecture time Dominic and his six companions presented themselves. They were all clad alike in the habit and surplice of the Augustinian canons, and they announced themselves as poor brothers who were about to preach the Gospel to both the faithful and the heretics of Toulouse, and who desired first of all to profit by his instructions. He was afterward to refer with great pride to the fact that he had been the first master of the Friars Preachers.³⁸

It is at this point that Bishop Foulques of Toulouse renders himself blessed in our memory by his assistance of the new plan. He arranged for support in the following document, which we give in its entirety: "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We make known to all present and to come, that we, Foulques, by the grace of God the humble minister of the see of Toulouse, desiring to extirpate heresy, to expel vice, to teach the rule of faith, and recall men to a holy life, appoint Brother Dominic and his companions to be preachers throughout our diocese; who propose to go on foot, as becomes religious, according to evangelical poverty, and to preach the word of evangelical truth. And because the workman is worthy

of his hire, and we are bound not to muzzle the mouth of the ox who treadeth out the corn, and because those who preach the gospel shall live by the gospel, we desire that, whilst preaching through the diocese, the necessary means of support be administered to them from the revenues of the diocese. Wherefore, with the consent of the chapter of the church of St. Stephen, and of all the clergy of our diocese, we assign in perpetuity to the aforesaid preachers, and to others who, being moved by zeal for God and love for the salvation of souls, shall employ themselves in the like work of preaching, the sixth part of the tithes destined for the building and ornamenting of all the parochial churches subject to our government, in order that they may provide themselves with habits, and whatsoever may be necessary to them when they shall be sick, or be in need of rest. If anything remain over at the year's end, let them give it back, that it may be applied to the adorning of the said parish churches, or the relief of the poor, according as the bishop shall see fit. For inasmuch as it is established by law that a certain part of the tithes shall always be assigned to the poor, it cannot be doubted that we are entitled to assign a certain portion thereof to those who voluntarily follow evangelical poverty for the love of Christ, laboring to enrich the world by their example and heavenly doctrine; and thus we shall satisfy our duty of freely scattering and dividing, both by ourselves and by means of others, spiritual things to those from whom we receive temporal things. Given in the year of the Word Incarnate 1215, in the reign of Philip, King of France, the principality of Toulouse being held by the Count de Montfort." ³⁹

In the autumn of the same year, Foulques of Toulouse set out for Rome to attend the approaching Council of the

Lateran. Dominic was his companion. Eleven years had passed since Dominic's first visit in company with the Bishop of Osma; they had been years of hard and solitary labor, and the work which he had visualized then was only now developing. Surely he was a man of tremendous faith or he might well have been discouraged as, coming for the second time within sight of the Eternal City, he remembered the years of his life that lay behind him, so full of patient work and seemingly blessed with so little fruit. It took more than mere human enthusiasm to visualize the task of reforming the world, when the only materials he had yet gathered for the struggle were the six companions of Toulouse. Innocent III still sat in the papal chair, and the Council of the Lateran formed almost a closing scene of a pontificate which must be held as one of the greatest ever given to the Church. On the eleventh of November, 1215, nearly five hundred bishops and eight hundred abbots and friars, plus the representatives of all the royal houses of Europe, met in that ancient church to discuss the problems of the world. Few Councils, excepting that of Trent, have higher claims on our veneration, for in it were defined some of the greatest articles of Catholic faith. The Albigenses, like so many other heretics, were the involuntary means of drawing forth an explicit declaration of the Church's doctrine and discipline and defining regulations of reform and Christian observance. The energy displayed by this Council and the nature of the decrees are sufficient evidence of the state in which the world and the Church were then found. There was everywhere a decay and a falling off. Old institutions were weakening, while indications were everywhere of an extraordinary activity and restlessness of mind. Europe had taken centuries to shake off the bar-

barian invasions, and during the thirteenth century the new growth was beginning. It was one of those junctures in world history when God raises up great men to shape the world anew. Among those who built a new world at that time were the founders of the friars.

As yet the Church possessed only the ancient forms of monasticism, with some institutes of later foundation which had a purely local influence, plus the military orders which were limited both in place and time. The Friars Minor were in fact several years older than the Preachers in their foundation, but they had not yet been formally established as a religious order; in fact it was a long time before even St. Francis himself would consider his followers as any more than a humble band of wandering poor folk dedicated to Lady Poverty. Dominic's ideal included a much wider field than any founder before or since has visualized. Practically speaking, he designed his Order for preaching and teaching throughout the whole world. To preach and teach presupposed that one was, first of all, a skilled theologian—hence the Order was clerical; secondly, that one would reach the thinkers among the heretics and deal with them in their own coin, which was at the time public disputation; and that the foes of truth should be fought wherever and whenever they were to be found. The motto *Veritas* is a good expression of the scope of Dominic's apostolate, for truth is universal and has no limits of time or place. With the Order bearing that motto, he could attack the enemy in places and situations that no man of the thirteenth century could visualize.

Father Mandonnet, after describing the sad plight of preaching in the early thirteenth century, brings out a point that we sometimes overlook in our evaluation of

the times. He says: "The problem was extremely serious in the cities. The early thirteenth century saw the close of an evolution from the feudal to the communal regime. Economic, social and political life, which until then had revolved within the orbit of the lord's chateau, now found its axis in the towns, which grew in importance daily and expanded round the artisan and trade in a mighty upswing. The towns became centers of prosperity and culture, and tended little by little to free themselves from a condition of dependence as well as from the influence of their former masters, ecclesiastical or civil. But the Church all the while stood rooted in the old order and in the feudal regime. Many of the communes were not the seat of a bishopric, and the few cities that had a bishop did not always have in him a preacher. The spiritual or pastoral life radiating from the monasteries of monks or even of canons did not, as a general rule, touch the cities, for the monasteries stood in isolated places. No one, so to speak, concerned himself about the souls in the rising towns; or, to be more exact, the clergy in such places were not ready to meet the people on the level of their new needs; neither in number nor in education had they kept pace with the progress of the communes." ⁴⁰

When and where did Dominic discover that the souls who needed help were crowded in the cities—merchants, students, artisans, craftsmen and men of all trades who were beginning to speak out in their guilds and ask questions that required thoughtful answers? Obviously he did discover it, for in spite of his own preference for solitude, he chose to work, not in the isolated valleys beloved of Bernard and Romuald, but in the cities where the souls were. It was a startling idea as he presented his plan to the Pope for approval.

Preaching, up to this time, had been strictly the business of the bishops. One of the decrees of the very Council of the Lateran then in session had been an exhortation to the bishops to use great discretion in the choice of proper persons to carry on the "holy exercise of preaching" in their place. This decree in no way visualized any special body of preachers; it simply restated the concept that preaching was the function of bishops and that anyone who spoke in their stead should be carefully chosen and qualified for so holy an office. The century preceding the Lateran Council had seen a plague of preachers who were neither holy nor qualified, preying upon Christendom. As always, the people hungered for the word of God, and if their own bishops did not or could not give it to them, they fell easy prey to wanderers who took their money and gave them only a shabby counterfeit of the Gospel. One wild sect after another had arisen to embarrass the authorities of Church and State, each built about the personality of some fanatical and poorly instructed preacher. Some of the wanderers lived in great poverty and asceticism, a fact they were swift to bring to the attention of their hearers as a condemnation of the clergy. The entire popular preaching movement was solidly anti-clerical, and it had caused endless trouble for the popes who had had to deal with it. It is hard to imagine a time in history when the very subject of popular preaching was quite so unpleasant to papal ears as the day in 1215 when Dominic, young priest from Spain, approached Pope Innocent III with a plan to found an Order of popular preachers. One cannot blame the Pope for proceeding with caution.

Dominic's name and reputation were well known and the Pope gave him many marks of personal friendship.

Furthermore, he granted an apostolic brief establishing the convent of Prouille and placing it under the protection of the Apostolic See. But when the plan for the foundation of the Order was laid before him, the novelty and the vastness of the design startled him. It appeared to encroach on the privileges of the bishops, and its boldness seemed dangerous at a moment when men's minds were so powerfully agitated. The Church had just ruled that no more new orders should be introduced or allowed. In the face of all this, it took great confidence for Dominic to present his case to what he well might believe was an unsympathetic audience.

Innocent was impressed both by the personality of Dominic and by the charm of his plan. His decision was one which indicates to us that he was a truly progressive and far-seeing person. He advised Dominic that the new order he projected could be founded only if it were based on one of the existing rules. Therefore he suggested that Dominic return to his companions in Toulouse to discuss the matter and then, when they had chosen a rule, return to him for approbation. He gave encouragement and a promise of future protection to the Order and, by singular circumstance, the name by which they were known for many centuries. Having occasion to address a letter to Dominic, he told his secretary to address it to "Brother Dominic and his companions"; then, after a moment's thought, he amended this to "Brother Dominic and those who preach with him in the country of Toulouse." A third time he stayed the secretary's hand and then dictated: "To Master Dominic and the *Brothers Preachers*." It was a title always to be held dear to Dominic.⁴¹

It was at this time, before he returned to Toulouse and while he was still negotiating for the beginning of his

Order, that Dominic, according to constant Dominican tradition, met for the first time a fellow founder and saint, Francis of Assisi.⁴² Medieval legends abound in accounts of their friendship; art preserves it, and so do the customs of both of the orders. Many accounts are given, differing in detail of place and time, but all alike bearing out the story of a holy friendship. According to most of the traditions, Pope Innocent saw in a dream the Basilica of the Lateran falling, and two men holding it up; upon seeing Dominic and Francis, he recognized them from his dream. Several places in Rome are indicated as the probable meeting place of the saints, and the Basilica of St. John Lateran adds to its other glories the probability that the meeting occurred there. In the words of Blessed Humbert, "they were brought forth together by our holy Mother the Church. God had destined them from all eternity to the same work of the salvation of souls."

The Council of the Lateran lasted three weeks and broke up at the end of November, 1215. In the early spring of the following year, Dominic found himself once more among the brethren of Toulouse. In the short period of his absence their numbers had increased from six to sixteen. We may well imagine the joy of their meeting. He explained to them the decision of the Holy See and the necessity of choosing a rule.

For this purpose he gathered the brethren at Our Lady of Prouille. After earnest prayer to the Holy Spirit, and quite probably some discussion, they agreed on the Rule of St. Augustine as being the one best adapted to the work they were going to do. Blessed Humbert tells us why: "For, since it contains little more than certain spiritual exhortations and recommendations dictated by reason, a character not marked in other rules, all the statutes per-

taining to preaching can be added to it.”⁴³ It was in most respects the simplest of rules available; both in age and in spirit it harked back almost to apostolic times, and it left its followers free to develop the details of their work unhampered by specific regulations while it stressed the basic principles of charity, poverty, and the common life. Dominic was familiar with the rule in practice, since he had lived under it for ten years at Osma and knew its possibilities. Some of the other brothers may likewise have had experience with it. They added to its precepts certain regulations later to be known as the “primitive constitutions,” which specified more particularly how the life was to be lived.

St. Norbert, nearly a century before this, had likewise based his foundation of Canons Regular on the Rule of St. Augustine. He had developed an Order combining the ancient forms of monasticism with active missionary labors. At first glance it would seem that the Dominicans might have found it simpler to join with the Norbertines rather than make a separate foundation. Dominic himself had many friends among the Norbertines; one of their writers, in fact, makes a claim that Dominic had received the Norbertine habit at the age of seventeen. He had gone often on pilgrimage to the several Lady shrines which were in charge of these canons, and without a doubt had discussed his vocation with his friends among them. Yet in his foundation he chose a different path.

On closer examination it is obvious that in spite of surface similarities the Norbertine canons and the Dominicans—even at that early date—were called to different works and were to fulfill a different place in the Church of God. Religious orders, we must never forget, are not mere creations of human intelligence but the result of a

definite divine vocation; these vocations they accomplish in an infinite variety of ways which human intelligence could never have planned or executed. The Order of Friars Preachers had a place to fill in the universal Church never yet filled by any religious body and never rivaled since. It was destined to be pre-eminently the Order of truth. Of the several Popes who have commented directly on this prerogative of the Order, Pope Clement IV has perhaps stated it most clearly: "Your Order is a fortified city which guards the truth and welcomes the faithful through its open portals. It is the sun shining in the temple of God, the cypress on the heights, lifting minds that regard it, the field of the Lord fragrant with celestial roses." ⁴⁴

Dominic's plan was threefold. The first and primary idea of the Order was to labor for the salvation of souls, but in setting this before him as his principal aim, he was not willing to abandon anything of the religious character of the older institutes. The whole of his design is expressed in that passage from the Constitutions where it is said that: "The Order of Preachers was principally and essentially designed for preaching and teaching, in order thereby to communicate to others the fruits of contemplation, and to procure the salvation of souls." ⁴⁵ Dominic knew very well that in order to sanctify others, a teacher must first sanctify himself, and in choosing the means of that sanctification he was willing to follow the guidance of antiquity. The means which had always been considered best in the rigorous discipline of the cloister were silence, poverty, prayer, fasting, a life of penance, and the influence of community life. He therefore included in the rule all the essential characteristics of monasticism. At the same time, a certain freedom and expansiveness was mingled with the

strictness of discipline, enabling it to mold itself to meet the needs of missionary work. The feature of his organization from which modern founders often digress is the choral Office. It is true that he made modifications with regard to the Office which make it distinct from that of the Benedictines and the Cistercians; Blessed Humbert states this clearly in saying that: "All the hours should be recited in the church *breviter et succincte* so that the brethren may not lose devotion and that their studies may suffer as little interruption as possible."⁴⁶ Yet there was never a question of omitting the choral Office. Father Mandonnet says: "There is no reason to suppose that the canonical Office was not included in the projects of St. Dominic in 1215, because it was a part of the life of the Preachers from the beginning. On this point the conduct of the Saint himself would afford sufficient evidence, for through all the labors of a zealous apostolate he was a contemplative soul."⁴⁷ He continues the thought in another context where he says: "We cannot estimate the magnificence of the successful combining in one rule elements so apparently contrary as the regular conventual life and apostolic labor. It was a case of supernatural inspiration supplementing the characteristic genius of St. Dominic."⁴⁸

In the Constitutions of the Order we find mixed with the usual enactments of regular discipline, certain powers of dispensation which are unique in the foundation of Dominic. It is hard for us to realize now just how unique they were when they were first made a part of the Constitutions, since most of the orders of the Church were quick to see the advantage of dispensation, and incorporated his ideas into their own rules. The main elements of the Dominican life—contemplation, community life,

apostolic labor for souls, and the cultivation of theology—are evident in the very first ordinances and point to the fact that the plan was completely formed in the mind of Dominic from the beginning.

Closely associated with Dominic in the foundation were a number of remarkable men to whom we owe gratitude for their piety and their sagacity. They were sixteen in number, men of several nationalities. Matthew of France we have mentioned before. He was obviously the wise old man of much experience in this group of predominantly young men. Bertrand of Garrigua was the constant companion of Dominic in his journeys, a faithful imitator of his life and his austerities. William Claret of Panders, Brother Noel of Prouille, Brother Dominic the Second (or “the Little”) and Brother John of Navarre all had been members of the preaching band of Toulouse. The two Spaniards, Michael of Fabra and Michael of Uzero were with Bishop Diego. Sueiro Gomez, a Portuguese of noble birth, had been in de Montfort’s army and had witnessed the miraculous rescue of the boat-load of pilgrims. Lawrence the Englishman was one of the rescued pilgrims. Stephen of Metz was a Belgian, a man of great austerity and zeal. Peter Seila and Thomas, the two citizens of Toulouse who had put a roof over the heads of the first six preachers, the laybrother Oderic of Normandy, and St. Dominic’s older brother Mannes completed the group.

As soon as the little council of Prouille had concluded its deliberations, Dominic returned to Toulouse. Here, fresh demonstrations of the friendship of Bishop Foulques awaited him. He gave to the new preaching band the custody of three churches, St. Romain at Toulouse and two others, all of which would in time have a convent

attached to them. Peter Seila's house was no longer big enough for the brethren, so a very humble cloister was built at St. Romain, little and poor but dear to us because it was the first real convent of the Order. The brethren moved into it in the summer of 1216.

When the brethren were settled at St. Romain, Dominic set out for Rome. Before he could leave France, the news arrived that Pope Innocent III was dead. His successor, Pope Honorius III, had already been elected. Sad at heart, Dominic proceeded to Rome, not to meet an old friend who understood his project, but to deal with a stranger who might refuse to have anything to do with the idea of an Order of Preachers.

CHAPTER 6

Foundation of the Order

THE death of Pope Innocent III was a severe blow to the hopes of the young Order, for Innocent had been a sure and faithful friend and it might well be a cause of great anxiety to have to treat with the new Pope on the confirmation of an unknown and controversial plan. Dominic, however, set out for Rome, leaving Bertrand of Garrigua to govern the convent in his absence. He reached Rome in September and found that the Pope was absent from Rome.

There was some little delay during which we have the picture of a poor and unknown friar sleeping at night in the churches and praying incessantly. It seemed at first as though there would be endless delays, for the new Pope had much business awaiting him; it was no small thing to take the place of Innocent III. In spite of all the difficulties, Dominic obtained the bull of confirmation on the twenty-second of December.

The first bull given by Honorius is of considerable length. It grants a variety of privileges and immunities, and confirms the Order in the possession of all the lands, churches, and revenues with which it had been endowed by Foulques of Toulouse in the diocesan approbation. The second bull is much shorter, and we insert it for the sake of a remarkable expression which it contains, prophetic for the future destiny of the Order: "Honorius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to our dear son Dominic, prior of St. Romain at Toulouse, and to your

brethren who have made or shall make profession of regular life, health and apostolic benediction. We, considering that the brethren of the Order will be the *champions of the faith* and true lights of the world, do confirm the Order in all its lands and possessions present and to come and we take under our protection and government the Order itself, with all its goods and rights.”⁴⁹

The two bulls were given on the same day. In neither of them, however, did the new Order receive the title which had been originally given it by Innocent III and which was so dear to Dominic, that of Preachers. In the third bull, dated the twenty-sixth of January, 1217, this omission is made up. It begins as follows: “Honorius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to his dear son the prior and brethren of St. Romain, preachers in the country of Toulouse.”⁵⁰

As soon as the first two bulls had been granted, Dominic was anxious to return to Toulouse, but was detained at Rome by the Pope, who had conceived a great affection for him. This brief period in Dominic’s life was full of instruction and importance for the Order. During this time he occupied the position which would later be called “Master of the Sacred Palace.”⁵¹ Its duties included the office of the Pope’s theologian, teaching before the court and the cardinals, and the censorship of all the books published in Rome. It is commemorated by the custom which endures to the present day, that this office is always filled by a Dominican.

Dominic spent his spare time visiting the churches in Rome; if legend is to be believed, he spent the time of sleep there also. His favorites were the churches enshrining the tombs of the apostles, and it was in one of these that he enjoyed a celebrated vision of Saints Peter and

Paul. The former gave him a staff, the latter a book, and they assured him that he should go and preach because that was the work for which God had designed him.⁵² He seemed to see his children setting out, two by two, into the far countries of the world. Legend insists that he always afterwards carried a staff on his journeys, and a copy of the Epistles of St. Paul. Very likely there were practical reasons for both of these items, but it is a charming legend none the less.

During this time also Dominic made a friend who was to be intensely loyal to him and to his Order and to whom we owe a great debt of gratitude. This was Cardinal Ugolino (Hugh) Conti, Cardinal Bishop of Ostia and afterwards Pope Gregory IX. He was a man of advanced age, but he understood and dearly loved Dominic and Francis, whose whole ideal was one of youth and progress. He counted his friendship with these two men as the greatest privilege of his life, and never lost an opportunity to help the two founders. A friend of Cardinal Hugh gives us a charming picture of St. Dominic, whom he met at the Cardinal's home. He tells us: "At that time Brother Dominic, the founder and first master of the Order of Preachers, was at the Roman Court and often visited my Lord of Ostia. . . . Many a time did we speak together of the eternal salvation of our own souls and those of all men. I never spoke to a man of equal perfection, or one so taken up with the salvation of mankind, although indeed I have talked to very many holy religious."⁵³ This man and several others of note became interested in following Dominic, and some did so.

Not until May, 1217, was Dominic allowed to return to Toulouse. His return was very welcome to his children; yet their joy was sobered when, almost immediately on his

arrival, he gathered them together and told them he was going to scatter them to begin their missions in the many countries where they were needed. Nearly everyone advised him against it. In other situations he had quietly accepted the judgment of others; in this he was firm. "Do not oppose me," he said, "for I know very well what I am doing. The seed will moulder if it is hoarded up; it will fructify if it is sown." ⁵⁴ His followers, whatever were their feelings on the subject, had too profound a veneration for his person and character to oppose him, and soon yielded the point. In the preparations that he made for the dispersion of his children he showed his anxiety for the observance and spirit of their rule. The convent of Toulouse he designated to be the model which was to be followed in all later foundations. Since he thought it well that the brethren should meet from time to time for mutual counsel and encouragement, he had two large rooms added to the convent, one for their meetings and one for their habits. Until now they had had no rooms but their cells and refectory. He exhorted them to observe the spirit of poverty, and forbade all elegances and curiosities, even in the chapel. The cells of the brethren were models of poverty; a little cane bedstead and a miserable bench were the only furniture allowed, and the cells had no doors, being open like the wards of the hospitals of that time.

The Feast of the Assumption of 1217 was chosen by Dominic as the day for launching his new apostolate; it is significant that he chose a feast of our Lady for such an important event. He called the brethren to the little church of Our Lady of Prouille so that for one time—in many ways the first and the last time—all the various elements of his apostolate might be together under one roof.

He had decided upon the missions, and his choice is indicative of the long road he had marked for his sons. Prouille and Toulouse, the cradle of the venture, came first; then the great university centers of Paris and Bologna; Rome, the center of Christendom; and Spain, his homeland. He himself was letting his beard grow so that he might go to Tartary when things were settled, if he could get permission to do so.

On the appointed day not only the brethren and the nuns were present, but great numbers of people from Toulouse and Prouille who had heard rumors of the dispersal. One of the spectators was Simon de Montfort. If legends are correct (as they sometimes are) there must also have been members of the "Militia of Jesus Christ" among the layfolk who crowded into the church to observe the ceremonies of departure. There were also a number of Cistercians present.

It was Dominic himself who sang the Mass, and at the end of Mass preached a sermon which, almost unique among his sermons, was a model of severity in tone. Generally his words were gentle and encouraging, his theme the Gospel and its ever lovely message. But the people of Languedoc had finally exhausted the patience of this great man and saint. He was not the first preacher to have trouble reaching the better nature of the easy-going Southerners; Bernard before him had scolded and exhorted, and even cursed one of the cities which had proved adamant to his teaching. Even gentle Bishop Diego had observed wryly that "it is at least clear that the people of Verfeil have no common sense." Now, after more than ten years among them, Dominic was forced to realize that though his Order had begun here, it must look elsewhere for an apostolate. He prophesied to the startled congrega-

tion that great misfortunes would come upon them. It was a sad farewell, and could not have made the parting easier.

After the address to the people, Dominic turned to the brethren. He reminded them of the purpose of their foundation and exhorted them to confidence in God and to unflinching courage in the cause of truth. After the sermon, according to some accounts, the brethren made their vows into his hands.⁵⁵ Then the nuns of Prouille likewise made their vows, promising also by vow of enclosure to remain at the Prouille cloister. Then the Saint scattered the seeds that were to yield so great a harvest in the years to come, and the people listened weeping while he told the brethren where they were to go.

William Claret and Brother Noel were to remain at Prouille, to care for the interests of the nuns; Peter Seila and Thomas were to continue at St. Romain. Stephen of Metz, Dominic retained for his own companion. Brothers Michael of Uzero, Dominic the Little, Peter of Madrid, and Sueiro Gómez were to go to Spain and Portugal. The largest group went to the intellectual center of the world, the University of Paris; these were Matthew of France, Bertrand of Garrigua, Michael of Fabra, Oderic, Mannes, John of Navarre, and Lawrence the Englishman.⁵⁶ Dominic insisted that the brethren should choose an abbot who could take over the leadership of the Order in case of his death or removal. (He probably did not tell them that he still cherished the hope of being martyred in Tartary.) They chose for this office Matthew of France, a venerable and holy priest of much practical experience. Dominic committed to him the bull of confirmation. Then he gave them all his blessing, and watched as they went away over the golden fields to reap the harvest of God.

We are told that only one out of the group objected to the very sketchy financial arrangements; this was the novice, John of Navarre. With a caution not wholly unreasonable, he asked for a little money for traveling expenses. Dominic replied with a Scriptural quotation about setting forth "without scrip or purse," but John was not convinced. Out of compassion for his youth, Dominic gave him twelve pence. Possibly it was this episode that shocked the Cistercians into criticizing Dominic for "sending out unlettered boys." Dominic's reply was a testimonial to his belief in youth: "I am certain that these boys of mine will go and return safely."

Father Bede Jarrett says in this connection, with regard to Dominic's "boys": "The character of St. Dominic naturally drew friends to him, and especially the young. His whole outlook on life, perhaps, appealed to them; his austere demand for generous devotion, his even-temperedness, his joyousness, his ready gift of companionship, his spirit of democratic government by which youth could and did climb instantly to places of importance, his genial breadth of view that tolerantly made a place for everyone in the Order. His 'boys' indeed, were almost a standing jest of the period, and many were the gibes levelled at them by their fellows and the reasonable criticism of their elders. Old dames, we read, trembled for their moral dangers, and even at times accosted Dominic to point out the impropriety of sending them to preach in twos and threes without an elder friar in charge, 'young and handsome and in so comely a habit.'⁵⁷ But the Saint only laughed at their objections, and prophesied great things for their work."⁵⁸

By October, Dominic was once more on the road to Rome. As he crossed the Alps for the fourth time on the

long journey, in company with Stephen of Metz, they must often have discussed the aims of the young Order, and prayed for the brethren who were plunged for the first time into the problem of converting a hard-hearted world. Little is written about this journey, but much has been speculated. Some historians—though not the earliest ones—report that St. Dominic founded a house in Venice, not the big convent of Saints John and Paul, but a little oratory that had formerly been dedicated to St. Daniel and which he re-dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary. It would be a lovely story if anyone could prove it, but so far, unfortunately, nobody has. Another legend relates that the Saint made at this time another attempt to get permission to go to Tartary, and that the Pope once more refused him. This, too, has never been proved. Quite likely it happened; we just do not know.

In the absence of any details of this trip to Rome, let us see what the authors tell us of the Saint as he made his way, preaching, through the north of Italy.

Dominic always traveled on foot with a little bundle on his shoulder and a staff in his hand. As soon as he was a little way out of the towns through which he passed, he would stop and take off his shoes, performing the rest of the journey barefoot, however rough and bad the roads might be. If a sharp stone or thorn cut his feet, he would turn to his companions with that cheerful and joyous air which was so peculiar to him and say, "This is penance!" Such kinds of penance were a particular pleasure to him. Coming once to a place covered with sharp flints, he said to his companion, "Miserable wretch that I was, I once had to put on my shoes passing this spot."⁵⁹ "Why so?" said the brother. "Because it had rained so much," replied Dominic. He would never let his companions help to

carry his bundle. When he looked down from the heights which they were descending, over any country or city which they were about to enter, he wept as he thought of the miseries men suffered there, and of their sins. Then he would pray that his own sins might not draw on them the punishment of heaven, for there was in him a great delicacy of conscience because of his profound reverence for the majesty of God.

His eyes were generally cast down and he seemed completely uninterested in curiosities. If he had to pass a river, he would make the sign of the cross and then enter it without hesitation.⁶⁰ If it rained, or any other discomfort made their journey difficult, he would sing some favorite hymn, the *Ave Maris Stella* or the *Veni Creator*. More than once at his word the rain ceased and the swollen rivers were passed without difficulty. He was indulgent in dispensing with the fasts for the brethren while they were traveling, an indulgence he never extended to himself. Usually as they walked along, he instructed his companions in points of spiritual doctrine; once in a while, as a signal that he wished to be left to silent meditation, he would ask his companions to walk on ahead.⁶¹ They would, as we read in their accounts, have preferred to stay where they could watch him, as it was a very moving thing to see him engaged in prayer. Prayer to him was informal and deeply personal, with an almost visible sense of the presence of God.⁶² He customarily prayed aloud, sometimes with tears and sighs, and occasionally he became so engrossed in his prayers that he lost all sense of direction. His companions, knowing what had happened, would go back to look for him, and sometimes they found him kneeling in some lonely place,

seemingly unafraid of the wolves and other dangerous creatures of the wilderness.

It must be acknowledged that Dominic had a wonderful bodily constitution; he was a giant among men spiritually, but he also had a wiry physique which bore all the punishment he gave it. The Church calls him a "holy athlete"; even in his physical make-up his austerity was a school of training which kept his body in subjection and made it a capable instrument for the almost impossible schedule he imposed upon it. He never felt fatigue, and we never read of any sickness until the last months of his life. Therefore, when he stopped for the night at some religious house, he never pleaded fatigue or failed to join in singing Matins.

These passing visits to convents, either his own or those of other orders, were always full of profit to the residents. They made the most of the few hours of his stay. Dominic never thought of asking for the privilege of a weary traveler. If the convent were under his own government, his first act was to call the religious together; he talked to them about spiritual things and comforted them and advised them. Even in convents of other orders his influence was felt, and often his visits were so delightful that when he left in the morning, the religious would go with him on his way to hear him talk just a little longer. On the occasions when he could not escape being entertained by people of high rank, he would first quench his thirst at some fountain lest he should be tempted to exceed religious modesty at table. He ate frugally indeed; even when he was a canon of Osma he never touched meat.

Thus journeying, he would stop and preach at all the towns and villages in his way. "What books have you

studied, Father," said a young man to him one day, "that your sermons are so full of the learning of holy Scripture?" "I have studied in the book of charity, my son," he replied, "more than in any other. It is the book which teaches us all things." ⁶³ One writer says of him in the process of canonization: "Wherever he was, whether at home or on a journey, he always spoke of God or to God; it was his desire that this practice would be introduced into the constitutions of his Order." ⁶⁴

Regarding his personal appearance, we have a minute description from the pen of Sister Cecilia, one of the first nuns of the convent of Rome. "He was of about middle stature, but slightly made; his face was beautiful, and rather sanguine in its color; his hair and beard of a fair and bright hue, and his eyes fine. From his forehead, and between his brows, there seemed to shine a light which drew respect and love from them that saw it. He was always joyous and agreeable, save when moved to compassion by the afflictions of his neighbors. His hands were long and beautiful, and his voice was clear, noble and musical. He was never bald, and he always preserved his religious crown or tonsure entire, mingled here and there with a very few white hairs." ⁶⁵ We also find an equally interesting description of his dress, written by Gerard de Frachet in 1256: "Everything about the blessed Dominic breathed of poverty: his habit, shoes, girdle, knife, books, and all like things. You might see him with his scapular very short, yet he did not care to cover it with his mantle even in the presence of great persons. He wore the same tunic summer and winter and it was very old and patched. His mantle was of the worst." ⁶⁶ The same spirit of poverty induced him never to have a bed or cell of his own. He slept in the church. If he came home late at

night drenched with rain, he would send his companions to dry and refresh themselves, but he himself would go as he was to the church. There his nights were passed in prayer, or if overcome with fatigue, he would sleep leaning against the altar steps. Three times in a night he disciplined himself to blood; the first time for himself, the second for sinners, the third for the souls in purgatory. There was neither place nor time in which he did not pray, but the nights which he spent alone with God were his particular choice. After Compline, when the rest of the community went to bed, he would visit all the altars, pouring out his heart in prayer. Sometimes one or another of the brothers would hide in the church for the joy of watching him engaged in so holy a pursuit. Obviously, to carry on a program of this sort for any length of time, one would have to be possessed of great physical and spiritual resources; as we said before, Dominic was a giant among men.

It is always interesting and a little puzzling to hear the saints refer to themselves as great sinners. Dominic's favorite ejaculations, taken from the penitential psalms, were imbued with this idea; his favorite was: "O God, be merciful to me a sinner." He spoke in the language of the Psalms as naturally as breathing, and the Epistles of St. Paul and the Gospel of St. Matthew appear in all of his preaching and exhortation. There is a touching little legend which gives him credit for starting the custom of saying "*Dignare me laudare te, Virgo sacrata*" each time that he got up to preach; it is quite probably true, in view of his tender devotion to our Lady.

All the old authors speak of his intense devotion when saying Mass. He almost always sang the Mass, and could never get through the Consecration without tears. This

we have from those who served his Masses; they speak with awe of the radiance of his face and the devotion of his prayer.⁶⁷

Of his manner towards his subjects, we read that his undeviating rule was charity. He was always their loving father, even when he had to reprove them. Rudolph of Faenza says of this: "He was always kind, cheerful, patient, joyful, merciful, and the consoler of his brethren. If he saw any of them commit a fault, he would act as though he did not notice it at the time, but afterwards, with serene countenance and with gentle speech, he would say 'Brother, you have done wrong; but now repent'; and so did he bring all to penance."⁶⁸ John of Navarre tells us: "He punished transgressors of the rule with severity and yet with mercy. He grieved greatly when he had to punish anyone."⁶⁹ Brother Paul of Venice adds: "So sweet and just was he in correction that none could ever be troubled by a punishment or a reproof received from him."⁷⁰

Blessed Jordan's words are a good summary of his character. In reading them it is interesting to remember the contradictory picture that history has given us about the Saint: "The goodness of his soul, and the holy fervor with which he acted, were so great that none could doubt him to be indeed a chosen vessel of honor adorned with precious stones. He had a particular firmness of spirit, always equal, save when moved to pity or compassion. The peace and quietude of his heart was manifest in his gentleness and his cheerful looks. And he was so firm and resolute in the determinations he had taken after just reflection, that never, or almost never, did any succeed in making him change his mind. The holy joy which shone in him had something singular about it, which drew all men's affections to him as soon as they had looked upon

his face. He embraced all in great charity, and was loved of all; his rule was to rejoice with them that rejoiced, and to weep with them that wept. He was all love for his neighbor, all pity for the poor, and the simplicity of his conduct, without a shadow of insincerity either in word or deed, made him dear to all." ⁷¹

CHAPTER 7

Old St. Sixtus

DOMINIC was received at Rome with renewed evidence of affection from Pope Honorius, who showed every disposition to further the foundation at Rome of a convent of the new Order. To this end, he gave Dominic and his companions the church of St. Sixtus on the Appian Way. This had been in ancient times the Patrician quarter of the city, but people had moved away from it, leaving it deserted, a street of tombs. This was the church which was to be the cradle of the Dominican Order in Rome.

Innocent III had had repairs made to the building with the object of gathering together a number of religious women who were then living in Rome under no regular discipline. The design had never been carried out, and Dominic was ignorant of it when he applied for and obtained the grant of the church. The repairs have imprinted themselves on the history of the Order because they occasioned a miracle. A mason, excavating under part of the building, was buried by a mass of falling earth. The brethren ran to the spot too late to save him, but Dominic commanded them to dig him out while he betook himself to prayer. They did so, and when the earth was removed the man arose alive and unhurt.⁷²

The design of collecting the religious women together had been beset with difficulty and finally failed completely. Even the papal authority, aided by the power and genius of such a man as Pope Innocent III, had been unable to overcome the wilfulness and prejudice which opposed the

project. Pope Honorius, who no less than his predecessor ardently desired to see it carried out, resolved to commit the management of the whole affair to Dominic. The Saint could not refuse, but aware of the complicated obstacles which lay in the way, he made it a condition that three other persons of high authority be united with him in a business which, he probably felt, was harder than establishing many new convents. The three were given him; his friend Cardinal Hugh, Stephen of Fossa Nuova, and Nicholas, Bishop of Tusculum.⁷³

The religious women had for a long time been badly governed; perhaps it would be more accurate to say they had not been governed at all. They were members of powerful families, and their relatives urged them to resist every curb on their liberty as an act of tyranny. The rules of cloister were badly kept; superiors had little authority. Indeed, in the existing state of things, it was hard to tell whom the sisters should obey. Into this delicate situation went the man of whom it was said that "none ever resisted the charm of his persuasion." It was a situation where he would need every talent he had.

The first recommendations of the commission were the opening gun for trouble. The Cardinals had a difficult time even in engaging the nuns' attention. The suggestion that the religious go into their cloister and stay there met with little enthusiasm. The people of Rome took sides in the matter and there was a strong party in favor of the nuns' retaining their freedom. A tempest of angry tongues declaimed against these unknown innovators who wanted to change matters. They insisted that the custom was so ancient it should not be changed, to which an early biographer of St. Dominic adds wryly that "the custom was indeed so very ancient that it could barely keep its

legs." He adds more soberly, "Moreover, we know well that for relaxation and liberty there will always be ten thousand persons ready to do great things, but for virtue, not one willing to stir a step." ⁷⁴ However, the nuns had the popular clamor on their side, and they used their advantage with considerable talent. They had only to receive visitors all day long, and keep up the excitement by perpetual talking, and the Pope and the Cardinals were held at bay.

The most refractory of these religious were some who were living in the monastery of St. Mary-beyond-the-Tiber. This part of Rome is even today a trouble spot and it must have been no different then. The convent's principal reason for being was a miraculous picture of our Lady, so ancient that it was supposed to have been painted by St. Luke. This picture was a favorite of the Roman people, and the possession of it meant great prestige and popularity to the nuns. At a last resort, when they were faced with moving, they protested piously that they could not possibly go without the picture, and that it would never suffer itself to be moved since it had been put there miraculously in the first place. Considering the vigorous piety with which the Roman people usually surround their favorite shrines, it is easy to see that they had a good argument when they insisted that the people of the neighborhood would never consent to the loss of the picture.

Dominic had made a change in his plans in order to carry out the Pope's wishes. He proposed giving up his own convent of St. Sixtus to the nuns and taking the brethren to that of Santa Sabina on the Aventine. A first visit to the nuns might have convinced anybody else that there was no use in trying to follow this plan. The very mention of enclosure and community life brought the

flat reply that they neither were nor would be under his authority nor that of the Cardinals nor the Pope. Dominic was not easily daunted. He came back again and on his second visit found means to win over the abbess, and after her all the community with one exception. The abbess, however, made a condition; the picture must be brought with them to St. Sixtus and should it come back to St. Mary-beyond-the-Tiber by itself, as it had on a former occasion, they should be free to come back with it. Dominic consented, and in order to give the whole plan stability, induced them to profess obedience in his hands. He forbade them to leave their convent in order to visit friends or relatives and left them with the hope that the affair would soon be settled.

"However," as one of the biographers discreetly expresses it, "the instability of human nature, and especially of the female sex, easy to be moved by whatsoever wind may blow, did very soon make the contrary to appear."⁷⁵ The wise regulation which Dominic had made was evaded and the wagging tongues were busier than ever. There were no terms too strong to use in denouncing the proposed migration to St. Sixtus. It would be the destruction of an ancient and honorable monastery; the nuns were blindly putting themselves under an intolerable yoke of obedience, and to whom? To a new man, a friar whom no one had ever heard of before, a scoundrel, as some were pleased to call him. The nuns began to think so too, and many of them repented of their promise. Dominic resolved to let the excitement die down a little before taking new measures. After a day or two he proceeded to the convent where, having said Mass, he assembled all the Sisters together and addressed them. He concluded with these words: "I well know, my daughters, that you have

repented of the promise you gave me, and now desire to withdraw from the ways of God. Therefore, let those among you who are truly and spontaneously willing to go to St. Sixtus make their profession over again in my hands.”⁷⁶ The eloquence of his address, heightened by that strange and wonderful charm of manner to which all who knew him bear witness, was victorious. The abbess instantly renewed her profession with the same condition of taking the picture, and her example was followed by the whole community.

Dominic was well satisfied with their sincerity; nevertheless he took a precaution against further relapse. It was a very simple one, and consisted in taking the gate keys into his own custody and appointing some of his own laybrothers as porters, with orders to provide the nuns with all necessaries but to prevent their seeing or speaking with their relatives or other people. On Ash Wednesday of that year, the Cardinals assembled at St. Sixtus to witness the ceremony in which the abbess solemnly surrendered all office and authority into the hands of Dominic.

Four days later, on the first Sunday in Lent, the nuns took possession of their convent. They were forty-four in all, including a few seculars and some religious of other convents. The first secular who spontaneously threw herself at Dominic’s feet and begged the habit of his order was Cecilia Cesarini, a daughter of one of the noble families of Rome. She was seventeen years old, a young woman possessed of unusual qualities of mind and soul, and she quickly recognized the leadership of Dominic.⁷⁷ We are told that Dominic communicated to her the inmost secrets of his heart, and it is from her narrative that we of later years get the truest picture of our Founder. Her example moved several other young women to join

the new community. They all received the habit of the Order and took the vow of enclosure.

Dominic waited until nightfall before he ventured to remove the famous picture. He feared that excitement and disturbance might be caused if he did it in daylight, for the people of the region were jealously possessive of their treasure. However, at night, accompanied by the two Cardinals and many other persons, all barefoot and carrying torches, he conducted the picture in solemn procession to St. Sixtus where the nuns awaited it. It never returned to St. Mary-beyond-the-Tiber, and its domestication in the new house completed the settlement of the nuns. They were soon joined by twenty-one other sisters from various houses, and so was born the second house of religious women living under the rule of St. Dominic.

During the short time that Dominic and his brethren had lived at St. Sixtus before giving it over to the nuns, many miracles had occurred. Before we follow him to the new home of Santa Sabina, it would be well to recount them. Dominic was accustomed at this time to preach in the Church of St. Mark, where he was listened to with enthusiasm by crowds of people of all ranks who flocked to hear him. One of his most devoted listeners was a Roman widow, Guatonia by name, and one day, rather than miss the preaching, she came to St. Mark's, leaving her only son, a small child ill at home.⁷⁸ When she returned from the sermon, she was horrified to find that the child had died. Convinced that St. Dominic could help her, she went with her servants, carrying the lifeless body of her child. Since St. Sixtus was still in the process of repair, it had not yet been enclosed, and she found her way into the cloister and discovered Dominic at the door of the chapter house. Kneeling at his feet, she laid the little boy before

him and told him the sad story. Dominic, touched with compassion, raised the child to life again and gave him back to his mother, charging her to keep the miracle a secret. However, as one may well imagine, she did no such thing but immediately published it all over Rome. The news reached the ears of Honorius and he ordered it to be publicly announced from all the pulpits in Rome. Dominic's humility was deeply hurt. He hastened to the Pope and implored him to countermand his order. "Otherwise, Holy Father," he said, "I shall be obliged to fly from here and cross the sea and preach to the Saracens; for I cannot stay longer here." ⁷⁹ The Pope, however, forbade him to depart and Dominic had to face that ordeal so difficult to a sensitive and humble heart: public praise.

This developed into a real problem, so enthusiastic were the Roman people. Great and little, old and young, nobles and beggars, "they followed him about wherever he went, as though he were an angel, counting themselves happy if they could get near enough to touch him, and cutting off pieces of his habit as souvenirs." ⁸⁰ This cutting of his habit according to one of his contemporaries, went on at such a pace that he began to resemble a scarecrow, for the jagged tunic reached barely to his knees. Some of his more conservative brethren tried to check the enthusiasm of the crowd, but Dominic's good nature was hurt when he saw the disappointed looks of the people. "Let them alone," he said, "we have no right to hinder their devotion." A memorial of these circumstances may still be seen in the Church of St. Mark. Once a year, on the feast of its patron saint, there is an exhibition in the church of holy relics. There, amid the relics of apostles and martyrs, set in jeweled and crystal shrines and elaborate carvings, you may see, enclosed in a golden reliquary,

a little piece of torn and faded serge. Priests hold up these precious objects one by one for the veneration of the kneeling crowd and with this one they say: "This is part of a habit of the glorious patriarch St. Dominic, who in the first year of his coming to Rome, used to preach in this Church." Fancy is quick to suggest that this precious souvenir was probably one of those clipped so unceremoniously from his habit in this very spot.⁸¹

Another miracle related as having occurred during this time was the cure of a certain laybrother of the convent, James by name. Apparently he was a man very much appreciated in his work, because we are told that the brethren interceded for him with St. Dominic. The Saint sent the others out of the room and prayed alone for the cure of the sick man. His prayer was promptly answered, to the great joy of everyone.⁸²

Perhaps the most interesting of all these miraculous events is one which is still daily remembered in every Dominican house. We are assured that a similar event happened twice during the period of his residence at St. Sixtus. In the narrative of Sister Cecilia: "When the friars were still living near the church of St. Sixtus, and were about one hundred in number, on a certain day the blessed Dominic commanded Brother John of Calabria and Brother Albert of Rome to go into the city to beg alms. They did so without success from the morning even till the third hour of the day. Therefore they returned to the convent and they were already hard by the church of St. Anastasia, when they were met by a certain woman who had a great devotion to the Order; and seeing that they had nothing with them, she gave them a loaf; 'For I would not,' she said, 'that you should go back quite empty-handed.' As they went on a little further, they met

a man who asked them very importunately for charity. They excused themselves, saying they had nothing themselves; but the man only begged the more earnestly. Then they said one to another, 'What can we do with only one loaf? Let us give it to him for the love of God.' So they gave him the loaf, and immediately they lost sight of him. Now, when they were come to the convent, the blessed Father, to whom the Holy Spirit had meanwhile revealed all that had passed, came out to meet them, saying to them with a joyful air, 'Children, you have nothing?' They replied, 'No, Father'; and they told him all that had happened, and how they had given the loaf to the poor man. Then said he, 'It was an angel of the Lord: the Lord will know how to provide for His own: let us go and pray.' Thereupon he entered the church, and, having come out again after a little space, he bade the brethren call the community to the refectory. They replied to him saying, 'But, holy father, how is it you would have us call them, seeing that there is nothing to give them to eat?' And they purposely delayed obeying the order which they had received. Therefore the blessed Father caused Brother Roger the cellarer to be summoned and commanded him to assemble the brethren to dinner, for the Lord would provide for their wants. Then they prepared the tables, and placed the cups, and at a given signal all the community entered the refectory. The blessed Father gave the benediction, and every one being seated, Brother Henry the Roman began to read. Meanwhile the blessed Dominic was praying, his hands being joined together on the table; and, lo! suddenly, even as he had promised them by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, two beautiful young men, ministers of the divine providence, appeared in the midst of the refectory, carrying loaves in two white cloths which

hung from their shoulders before and behind. They began to distribute the bread, beginning at the lower rows, one at the right hand, and the other at the left, placing before each brother one whole loaf of admirable beauty. Then, when they were come to the blessed Dominic, and had in like manner placed an entire loaf before him, they bowed their heads, and disappeared, without any one knowing, even to this day, whence they came or whither they went. And the blessed Dominic said to his brethren: 'My brethren, eat the bread which the Lord has sent you.' Then he told the servers to pour out some wine. But they replied, 'Holy Father, there is none.' Then the blessed Dominic, full of the spirit of prophecy, said to them, 'Go to the vessel, and pour out to the brethren the wine which the Lord has sent them.' They went there, and found, indeed, that the vessel was filled up to the brim with an excellent wine, which they hastened to bring. And Dominic said, 'Drink, my brethren, of the wine which the Lord has sent you.' They ate, therefore, and drank as much as they desired, both that day, and the next, and the day after that. But after the meal of the third day, he caused them to give what remained of the bread and wine to the poor, and would not allow that any more of it should be kept in the house. During these three days no one went to seek alms, because God had sent them bread and wine in abundance." ⁸³

During the ceremony of profession of the nuns of St. Sixtus there was great excitement and a call for the Saint to come out, since the nephew of one of the bishops who was acting with him in this case had just been thrown from his horse and was lying dead in the square outside. The uncle of the boy, hearing the sad news, fell fainting into the arms of a bystander. The body of the young man

was brought in, badly mangled from the accident, and laid at the feet of the Saint. Dominic ordered them immediately to remove the body to another room. Once more life came back at his request; this time after he had offered the Holy Sacrifice. Bystanders testified that during the Mass they had seen him raised above the ground. There were hundreds of witnesses to the miraculous answer when he spoke to the dead youth and commanded: "Young man, I say to thee arise." The youth rose up joyful and with no sign of injury and was restored to his family.⁸⁴ This miracle was instrumental in bringing into the Order two of its most famous sons; they were the brothers, Hyacinth and Ceslaus, and were later to win great renown as the apostles of the North.

It is at this time that Dominic, the obscure preaching brother, became Dominic, the Saint of the people. If the French mission developed his preaching talents and established his Order as the theological bulwark of the Church, it was the devout and uninhibited Italians who made him known to the world as a Saint with a Christlike compassion for the ills of men. Legends grew about him wherever he walked in the colorful land. Unlike the argumentative folk of Languedoc, the Italians received him with open arms.

When Dominic was fairly settled at Santa Sabina, he saw himself surrounded by a multiplicity of cares and occupations, any one of which would have occupied the whole time and strength of an ordinary man. He had first of all the care of the two communities, that of his friars preachers and that of the nuns. He had an increasing number of novices to train in his ideal; unused to rule and discipline, they had to learn the whole science of religion from his lips alone. The training of the nuns of St. Sixtus

was an even harder task, for with them there were long habits of negligence to eradicate before the spirit of fervor could possibly be introduced. He visited them daily, instructing them in the rule. He sent to Prouille for eight of the more experienced religious, one of whom, Sister Blanche, he made their superior. Enclosure and the observance of the rule produced marvels, and the undisciplined nuns of St. Mary-beyond-the-Tiber became models of sanctity and grace. The management of these two undertakings called for a genius of government which few have ever possessed in a more remarkable degree than St. Dominic.

On the second Sunday in Lent Dominic preached in the nuns' church, standing at the grating so that he might be heard by the nuns as well as by the congregation. While he was preaching, a possessed woman in the crowd interrupted him, crying out: "Villain! These nuns were once mine, and you have robbed me of them all; all but one, for this one is mine! We are seven in number that have her in our keeping." ⁸⁵ Dominic commanded her to be quiet and made the sign of the cross over her. In the presence of all the spectators she was delivered from her tormenters. A few days after this, she came to him and threw herself at his feet and begged to be allowed to take the habit. He placed her in the monastery of St. Sixtus and gave her the name Amata to remind her of the love of God in her behalf. Some authors have tried to identify her with the Amata who died in the odor of sanctity in Bologna and was buried with Sisters Diana and Cecilia. Such a conclusion is hard to justify; Amata—Beloved of God—was not an uncommon name for the Saint to bestow, and he must have sent many young women to the convent at one time or another. This is another of the things we

heartily wish we knew about—and do not. But whoever Amata was, she does point up the fact that the Saint was often successfully called in to cast out devils, a symbol of what he hoped to do in the world.

CHAPTER 8

First Fruits

WHILE St. Dominic was busy in Rome, the friars who had gone out so bravely on the Feast of the Assumption the year before were having their difficulties. The little community destined for the French capital met with much trouble, principally because they were unknown. The two who went to Spain returned after a fruitless year. The French mission band might have done much the same thing, but they were strengthened by a number of heavenly signs indicating the future of their work there. At the very time that they were going into the city, they were in great fear and doubt at the thought of preaching in so great a center as Paris, which probably seemed to them to be the hub of the world.

It was Lawrence the Englishman to whom the revelation came by means of a promise of our Lady, telling of the future success of their work.⁸⁶ As usual in every point of decision, the Blessed Mother of God played a lively part in encouraging these friars whom most people called quite simply the "Brothers of Mary." Notwithstanding their joy at this revelation, they spent nearly a year in great distress. No one but Matthew of France had any friends in Paris, and there was quite possibly a very real snobbery among those who made up the University. It was not until August, 1218, that they finally acquired a church, a very small one called St. Jacques, attached to a hospice for poor strangers. No one at that time could

possibly forsee the fame of this house or the long line of distinguished sons it would give to the Church.

The local clergy was, for one reason or another, unhappy about the coming of the friars to Paris. Poor as they were, ill-housed and unprivileged, they drew the youth like a magnet, and jealousy we have always with us. In years to come, the convent of St. Jacques was to be the focal point of the battle for Scholastic philosophy, of a "town and gown" conflict which even at this distance makes lively reading. But in the first year, when all this learned controversy was in the future, the parish clergy alarmed themselves, not about the University life of the friars, but about their parochial rights. They were afraid that the chanted Office and the various colorful ceremonies of the Preachers' chapel would draw members of their own flocks away, as, in fact, they did. Matthew of France appealed to the Pope on behalf of the friars, and won his case. It is amusing for us, though it could not have been for them, to know that the chancellor of Notre Dame never forgave the Dominicans for winning their case and that, to quote an old author, "he snarled at them on every occasion and in every sermon." St. Dominic himself explained the matter to Pope Honorius III, who tactfully complimented the University authorities on their reception of the friars and indicated that he wanted them to continue to receive them favorably. "In so doing," he said, "God will prosper you, and you will more and more deserve our good-will and favor."⁸⁷ While the French foundation was still new and uncertain—for Dominic did not believe in letting grass grow under his feet—he recalled Lawrence and John of Navarre to Rome. At this time three more brothers were sent out to begin a foundation in Bologna. Their preaching soon attracted great

attention and shortly they were given two houses with a neighboring church called Santa Maria della Mascarella. They were soon joined by the two who had returned from Spain.

Dominic's inflexible rule, "We must scatter the seed; it will mould if we hoard it up," was still being ruthlessly applied. No sooner did a foundation begin to get its balance amid the swirling activities of some busy or possibly hostile city, than Dominic would scatter the brethren for more foundations. There must often have been hard sacrifices and struggles with nature when his children were separated from him, almost as soon as they had learned to love him. There was something marvelous in the way in which he habitually scattered the brethren here and there through all parts of the Church of God, without his confidence ever being disquieted by even a shadow of hesitation.

The house in Bologna, in spite of the fact that it consisted of only five people, was a house of regular observance in the strictest sense of the word. The quarters were very small and not designed for religious life, but the brothers arranged a dormitory and a refectory and other necessary accommodations as best they could. The cells were so small that they could barely contain a narrow bed and a few other things; the actual measurements recorded are seven feet long by four feet wide. In this situation they led a life of angels, according to the chronicle, and "so wonderful was their regular observance and their continual and fervent prayer; so extraordinary their poverty in eating, in their beds and clothes, and all such things, that never had the like been seen before in the city." But in spite of their favorable reception, in spite of the beauty of their lives, their history up to the end of 1218 was a

story of persecutions and difficulties with few tangible successes. Only after the arrival of Reginald did the harvest of their hard sowing appear.

In Spain, Peter of Madrid succeeded finally in founding a convent at Madrid. Two of his companions returned to Rome. Sueiro Gomez went on to his native country of Portugal, where he built a little hermitage of stones and straw in which he lived in solitude for some time. He went out from his hermitage to preach daily in the city, and soon was surrounded by well-born youths of his own country who formed the nucleus of the Dominican Order in Portugal. Sueiro was in every way a remarkable man; his adherence to the rule to the tiniest particular was a proverb among the brethren. He was eventually to become the first provincial of Spain.

Some of the brethren were called to the Order in remarkable ways. Tancred, the prior of St. Sixtus, was one of these.⁸⁸ He was a German, a courtier of the Emperor Frederick II. Being at Bologna when the first brethren came, he was one day made aware of a great impression on his soul hard to explain and completely new to him. Disturbed, he prayed to the Blessed Virgin for direction. In his dreams she appeared to him saying, "Go to my household." It was still not very clear, but in a second dream he beheld two men dressed in black and white habits, and the elder said to him, "You have asked of Mary to be directed in the way of salvation. Come with us and you shall find it." The following morning he went to Mass at Santa Maria in Mascarella, and there saw the friars of his dream. Severing his engagements with the court, he proceeded to Rome, where he took the habit. Another brother, Henry, entered the Order against the

wishes of his family. As they insisted they would carry him back by force if he would not return, Dominic sent him out of Rome with some companions. His relatives followed him as far as the banks of a river. The brothers had already crossed and were praying for help, when the waters of the river rose so high that the horses of his pursuers could not follow.

One of the most famous of Dominic's early followers was St. Hyacinth. He and his brother Ceslaus, canons of the Cathedral of Cracow, were in Rome on a pilgrimage with their uncle, who was Bishop of Cracow.⁸⁹ They were witnesses of the miracle at St. Sixtus when the Cardinal's nephew was raised to life by St. Dominic. It was Cardinal Hugh Conti who guided them into the presence of the Saint so that they became personally acquainted with him. The bishop, Ivo of Cracow, begged Dominic to send some of his friars to Poland, but there was the tremendous difficulty of the Polish language; nearly all the available brothers were Latins and no one was equipped for the Slavic missions. Dominic's solution was delightfully simple and direct, as so many of his decisions were; he proposed to make Dominicans out of the bishop's two nephews, who already knew the language and the people! The idea was a little startling to the travelers from the North, who had probably not contemplated any change in their state of life. However, a few days later they presented themselves at Dominic's feet and asked for the habit of the Order. In company with them were two other young men, Henry of Moravia, a Czech, and Herman of Germany. The four were taken into the Order and trained by St. Dominic himself. When we read that six months later they were sent back to

their own countries, we can imagine the fervor and intensity of those six months at Santa Sabina under the saintly hands of Dominic.

If we are tempted to think that this "short course" was insufficient to train a man in the Dominican ideal, we have only to look at the record of these four novices. In them, more than in anyone else, did Dominic realize his dream of going to Tartary; in the lands they evangelized they covered half of the known world. Hyacinth and Ceslaus headed directly North and then, after dividing the land between them, went their separate ways. Whether they ever met again, we do not know. Ceslaus worked in Bohemia on the fringe of Tartary, and is several times credited with pushing back the Tartar army by means of his prayers. Hyacinth traveled through Russia, Sweden, Norway, Prussia and the Northern nations of Asia; he is said to have traveled more than twenty-five thousand miles on foot in his missionary work. Henry worked in Styria and Austria, founding many convents, including that of Vienna. Herman stayed at Friesech to govern the convent there. Through prayer he is supposed to have received such an understanding of the Holy Scriptures that he became a renowned preacher both in Latin and in German.

Another distinguished preacher was Rudolph of Faenza, who entered the Order probably at this time. Some affirm that he was actually confessor to St. Dominic and that on one occasion when Dominic was afflicted by the withdrawal of some of his promising novices, Rudolph comforted him by telling him of a vision.⁹⁰ He had seen in this vision our Lord and His Blessed Mother, who had taken him to a river where there was a great ship filled with Dominican friars, and said to him, "They are going

forth to fill and replenish the world." It is Rudolph, too, who tells us in a little human anecdote that Dominic, who ate very little and so would finish before the rest of the brethren, would sometimes fall asleep at the table from weariness.⁹¹

The stream of novices continued to flow steadily into the cells of Santa Sabina. Theodoric of Apoldia says of this that "when they looked on the beauty and purity of the institute they regretted only that they had not entered it sooner." A great care was taken of the novices, both as to instruction and their health, lest indiscreet zeal wear them out too soon. We read that instead of its being necessary to wake them for the midnight office, it was rather necessary to look for them in retired places where they had hidden to pray and send them to bed to get some rest. The abstinence they practiced was remarkable; their zeal in preaching a shining example. When it was proposed to send missions among the barbarian nations, or wherever there was a certainty of suffering, crowds offered themselves for the service. They had a holy eagerness for the salvation of souls and the crown of martyrdom.

CHAPTER 9

Reginald and Jordan

THE story of Reginald of Orleans belongs in point of time to the period of St. Sixtus and the foundation of Santa Sabina, but because it has a peculiar importance in the Order it is considered separately. Reginald, who lived only a year in the Order, had probably the shortest career of any Dominican Blessed with the exception of Blessed Imelda. However, the importance of his career to the young Order and to us today cannot be overestimated; the definitive form of the Dominican habit was only one of his many gifts to us. Blessed Jordan, who must also be counted as one of his gifts, was in a very real sense the second founder of the Order.

We are surprised to find that the tremendous work of Dominic was accomplished in so short a space of time; he founded his Order and in five years he was dead. To take over the reins of government and carry into execution the tremendous ideals of this extraordinary man took another extraordinary man; God sent us Jordan of Saxony. The story of these two men is one of the most beautiful chapters in Dominican history.

Reginald, dean of the church of Orleans, had come to Rome with his bishop with the intention of visiting the Holy Land.⁹² Reginald was already known as a canonist, and had held the chair of canon law at the University of Paris, which at that time meant world-wide distinction. But brilliant as was his intellect and great as was the renown which it had procured him, it did not satisfy him.

He had within him something greater than genius, and a thirst which the world's applause could not satisfy. While the world of Paris was busy with his fame, there had come upon him a desire to abandon all things for Christ and to take refuge from popular applause in some state where he could spend his life for the souls of others, while his own should be made a sharer in the poverty and nakedness of the Crucified. His pilgrimage to Rome and Jerusalem was partly undertaken with a view to settling his vocation.

At this point he met Cardinal Hugh, an old friend, and they happened to discuss the young doctor's vocation. Cardinal Hugh, who had always befriended the Friars Preachers and who, in the past year, had heard increasingly wonderful stories of their sanctity and of their way of life, immediately sent Reginald to talk to Dominic. The two men recognized each other as kindred souls and in the ordinary course of events their affairs might have been settled quickly. However, neither of them suffered from the ordinariness of events; an extraordinary one happened now. Reginald had barely met Dominic and resolved to enter his Order, when he was stricken with one of those swift and deadly Roman fevers against which there was so little help in the thirteenth century. Barely a day sufficed to bring him to the gates of death.

Whether the cure of Reginald can be adduced as one of the miracles of St. Dominic it is difficult to say. Certainly there was something miraculous about it. We read that Dominic, grieved at the thought of losing Reginald when he was scarcely born into the Order, earnestly pleaded with God to spare his life. The saints are too well versed in the divine science to pray against the will of God; it is quite likely (though of course we cannot prove it now)

that Dominic asked for a loan of this gifted child before he should be hurried off to heaven.

Tradition relates that while Dominic was praying, our Blessed Mother came to the sick man to answer the prayer in person. Reginald lay awake, burning with fever; but there was no question of his imagining the vision of the Mistress of the world and her two companions. The story is loveliest in its ancient form, from the chronicles of Blessed Humbert: "He fell sick, so that the physicians despaired even of saving his life. The blessed Dominic, grieving at the thought of losing a child ere as yet he had scarcely enjoyed him, turned himself to the divine mercy, earnestly imploring God (as he himself has related to the brethren) that He would not take from him a son as yet but hardly born, but at least to prolong his life, if it were but a little while. And even whilst he yet prayed, the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, and Mistress of the world, accompanied by two young maidens of surpassing beauty, appeared to Master Reginald as he lay awake and parched with a burning fever; and he heard the Queen of Heaven speaking to him and saying, 'Ask me what thou wilt, and I will give it to thee.' And as he considered within himself, one of the maidens who accompanied the Blessed Virgin suggested to him that he should ask nothing, but should leave it to the will and pleasure of the Queen of Mercy, to the which he right willingly assented. Then she, extending her virginal hand, anointed his eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth, hands, reins, and feet, pronouncing certain words meanwhile appropriate to each anointing. I have heard only those which she spoke at the unction of his reins and feet: the first were, 'Let thy reins be girt with the girdle of chastity;' and the second, 'Let thy feet be shod for the preaching of the Gospel of

peace.' Then she showed to him the habit of the Friars Preachers, saying to him, 'Behold the habit of thy order,' and so she disappeared from his eyes. And at the same time Reginald perceived that he was cured, having been anointed by the Mother of Him who has the secrets of salvation and of health. And the next morning, when Dominic came to him, to ask him how he fared, he answered that nothing ailed him, and so told him the vision. Then both together did render thanks to God, who strikes and heals, who wounds and who maketh whole." ⁹³

Reginald made these facts known to Dominic, probably because he felt that the scapular vision should be revealed to the whole Order. However, he begged him out of humility not to mention his own part in the story until after his death, a circumstance which would indicate that he knew he had not long to live. Dominic complied with his request, and in announcing to his brethren his intention of changing the form of their habit, he did not give the reason which had caused the change until after Reginald's death. Until this time the brothers had worn the habit of the Canons Regular of St. Augustine.⁹⁴ Perhaps experience had already demonstrated that the linen rochet was an inconvenient garment for their long dusty treks from mission to mission. They replaced it with the long woolen scapular designed after the description of Reginald. We are not told that the black cappa was adopted at the same time, though it probably was. It was the scapular that distinguished the change, and we remember even today the legend of its giving when, in the reception of the Dominican habit, we are told: "Receive the holy scapular of our Order, the most distinguished part of the Dominican habit, the

maternal pledge from heaven of the love of the Blessed Virgin Mary towards us." ⁹⁵

After his miraculous recovery, Reginald made his promised trip to the Holy Land and as soon as he had returned promptly went to work, with Bologna as the field of his endeavors. He arrived at the little convent of the Mascarella just before Christmas, 1218.

The brethren had been making slow progress and were dispirited and in need of encouragement. The coming of Reginald was not only a new beginning; it infused vitality into the whole mission. Reginald had hardly been there a week when crowds of people were flocking to hear him, and the magnetic quality of his sermons had already begun to attract vocations.

There was a certain vehemence of spirit about Reginald that swept all before him. Very soon the church was too small to contain the crowds and he was compelled to preach in the streets and public squares. People came from all the surrounding towns and country to hear him, declaring that the age of the apostles had returned. The fire of his words produced an astonishing effect of the hearts of all who listened, and a general change of manners took place among all ranks. Vast numbers were kindled with a holy and impetuous enthusiasm and, feeling the call of God in their hearts, they turned their backs on the world and eagerly demanded the habit of religion.

The first to join the Order after the arrival of Reginald was Roland of Cremona, the public lecturer in philosophy at the University. His coming was most opportune, for the brethren were still suffering from discouragement and in spite of the presence of Reginald, some had resolved to quit the Order. They were assembled in chapter,

engaged in a sorrowful conference, when the door suddenly opened and Roland appeared among them begging for the habit. Reginald took off his own scapular and flung it over the shoulders of the famous man. This incident marked the turning of the tide, and no more was heard from the brethren of discouragement.⁹⁶ Shortly after this, Master Moneta, also a professor at the University, found himself involved with the Preachers. Before the coming of Reginald he had made no secret of his scorn for the friars, and he watched with growing annoyance as first one and then another of his most promising students tossed aside worldly prospects and followed the sound of Reginald's voice. The day came when his students prevailed upon him to go himself to hear the famous preacher; perhaps it was a dare. He delayed the moment as long as possible by insisting that they go to Mass first. Having heard three Masses and run clear out of excuses, he finally proceeded to the square where Reginald was preaching. He had hoped to be too late for the sermon, and he was indeed too late to get inside the church where Reginald was preaching on the saint of the day, St. Stephen. Moneta, standing uncomfortably in the doorway, heard the call of grace at the words of the preacher: "Behold, I see heaven open, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. Heaven is open today also; the door is always open to him who is willing to enter. Why do you delay? Why do you linger on the threshold? What blindness, what negligence is this! The heavens are still open!" As Reginald came down from the pulpit, Master Moneta was waiting for him. After a year's probation, he too was allowed to enter the Order, and his conversion played its part in building up the prestige of the Preachers.⁹⁷

So many famous men entered the Order at Bologna that it would take a separate volume to do them justice. Among those drawn by Reginald was Brother Robaldo, who afterwards became distinguished for his success in preaching against the heretics in the city of Milan. Bonviso of Piacenza was another of the novices clothed in Bologna. He was one of those who later gave evidence at the canonization of St. Dominic. Stephen of Spain was another, and the story of his vocation was remarkable as he himself described it. He was at that time a student in Bologna. "While I was there, Master Dominic arrived and preached to the students and others. I went to confession to him, and I thought he loved me. One evening I was sitting down to supper with my companions, when two of the friars came to me and said, 'Master Dominic is asking for you.' I replied that I would come as soon as I had supped, and they repeated that he expected me at once. I rose and, leaving everything as it was, I came to St. Nicholas, where I found Master Dominic in the midst of the friars. He turned to them and said 'Show him how to make the prostration.' They having shown me how to do it, I made it, and he instantly gave me the habit of the Friars Preachers." He adds, and we can well understand it, "I have never thought of this without astonishment." 98

Within six months, Reginald received more than a hundred persons into the Order. Among these were several of the most distinguished doctors and students of the University. It came to be a common saying that it was not safe to go near Master Reginald if you did not wish to take the friar's habit. Mothers tried to hide their sons to keep them from this kidnaper of youth; the University authorities complained that he stole their most

talented young men. The effect on the Order, struggling and as yet relatively unknown, can be imagined. It was, after all, only three years old.

The rapid increase of the brethren soon made their convent impossibly small. Early in the spring of 1219, they moved to the church and convent of St. Nicholas of the Vineyards, just outside the city walls. Many miraculous signs had betokened the future sanctity of this place; workers in the vineyards had heard the angels singing there, and a kind of universal tradition had pointed it out as some day to be a place of prayer and pilgrimage. The life led there by the brothers in the time of Blessed Reginald was a worthy fulfillment of all these prophecies; truly, said the people of the neighborhood, the angels were still singing there. It was the strictest and most fervent realization of the rule of Dominic which has ever been seen.

The observance of the rule of silence practiced among them can be seen by the following anecdote. One night a friar, being in prayer in the choir, was seized by an invisible hand and dragged violently about the church so that he cried aloud for help. These disturbances, arising from diabolic malice, were very frequent in the beginning of the Order, and at the sound of the cry more than thirty brethren, guessing the cause, ran into the church and tried to help the friar. They could not help him, but were themselves dragged and thrown about without pity. Finally Reginald himself appeared, and delivered the brother from his tormentor. All this while, in spite of the horror of the circumstances, no one spoke; the first cry of the tormented brother was the only one uttered during the whole affair. This admirable discipline was

certainly attained and preserved by the practice of a somewhat rigid austerity; yet its very sharpness shows the perfection reached by those who could practice it.

The great talents and success of Reginald determined Dominic to move him to Paris in the hopes that he would do as much for the convent there as he had done for Bologna. His departure was a severe grief to his brethren but great good fortune for Paris. Here his marvelous eloquence soon drew all to him. When he preached, the streets were deserted. Matthew of France, who had himself been a student at Paris when Reginald was professor there, asked him once how he, who had been so used to luxury and so brilliant a light in the world, had found it possible to persevere in the severe discipline of the Order. Reginald assured him that he had found the austere life to be sweet and easy, and some of this sweetness was in his preaching, drawing the young men irresistibly to him. Among those who came into the Order at Paris were many famous men, including Robert Kilwardby, later Archbishop of Canterbury.

Reginald's star was setting; after a short and brilliant career he was to die in the early part of March, 1220. Just as he hurried off to heaven, leaving the Order bereft of its most eloquent preacher he replaced himself, so to speak, with a young man who would carry on his work. This was Jordan of Saxony, a bachelor of the University, a man of brilliant promise and stainless life.⁹⁹ Jordan had thought for some time of the matter of religious vocation, and had indeed discussed it with St. Dominic. It was Reginald who finally settled the matter for him. He inspired the young man with such zeal that he would gladly have entered immediately, but he remained at his work until he could convince his friend, Henry of Utrecht,

to come with him. At last Henry yielded to grace and the two were clothed together at the end of Lent, 1220. Reginald was dying, unafraid and fortified by that beautiful vision of the Mother of God which, we may well believe, held consolations for him of which he never spoke. Jordan, too, had a prophetic dream at this time; he saw in his vision a clear and sparkling fountain suddenly spring up in the church of St. James, and as suddenly fail. He understood it to symbolize the work and the untimely death of Reginald. As he grieved, a clear stream of water took the place of the fountain and flowed on in immense waves until it filled the world. It was a fit emblem of his own career, so abundant in its fruitfulness that he is said to have clothed more than a thousand novices with his own hand.¹⁰⁰

CHAPTER 10

Home to Spain

IN the autumn of 1218 Dominic prepared to leave Rome to visit the new foundations. The year just closing had seen his friars scattered the length and breadth of Europe. The houses were still young and struggling and like any good father, he wanted to give them what help he could. There is a legend that he had another reason for leaving Rome at this time: the fame of his miracles was so great that humility urged him to get away. In any case, October found him leaving the city gates with his staff and his copy of the Gospels, on the way to Bologna. He traveled in the company of Brothers Hyacinth, Ceslaus, and Henry, a Franciscan Brother Albert, and several others.¹⁰¹ In point of time his visit to Bologna came before the arrival of Blessed Reginald, who was to bring such an abundant harvest to the community there. When Dominic came to them, they were much in need of encouragement and still struggling against the difficulties that Reginald was to resolve.

Dominic's visit at Bologna was very brief. He was on his way to Spain, and one gets the impression that he paid a flying visit to Bologna only because they needed him so badly. After a brief visit, he set out with the Franciscan and his own companion and started once more for Spain. There are several intriguing miracles told of this trip which seem not to have gotten into the better known lives. The first happened just as they were leaving the city gates. A fierce dog attacked them, and although he did not

injure them, he tore the Franciscan's habit so badly that he could not proceed on his journey. Dominic took a little mud and carefully patched the edges of the torn garment together.¹⁰² When the mud dried, the Franciscan found to his amazement that his habit was perfectly mended; we can well understand his amazement. A second story is given us by Castillo. The party of friars (they had apparently accumulated a few more traveling companions) arrived one day at an inn. The landlady, who knew from experience that friars were not the best paying customers, was much put out to see a crowd of them come into the inn. They were deep in a spiritual conversation, which she hastened to interrupt by her mutterings and curses. Dominic turned from his companions to tell her quite amiably who they were and that they would not be long in her establishment. For once his charm had no effect; she kept up a steady stream of abuse. Finally the Saint turned to her and said, "Sister, since you will not leave us in peace for the love of God, I pray Him that He will quiet you."¹⁰³ It is related that she lost the power of speech until the Saint had returned from Spain, when she prayed that he would deliver her from this infirmity. This he did, with a warning that she should hereafter use her tongue to praise God.

It was probably on this journey that the following incident occurred in the city of Faenza. Albert, the bishop of Faenza, was so charmed by the eloquence of Dominic that he insisted on lodging him in his own palace. It was not the bishop's custom to rise at midnight for Matins, but it was Dominic's. The bishop's servants were amazed to find that their visitor got in and out of the house without any difficulties in spite of the locked doors. Some of them took the trouble to wait up and see how he did it.

They saw two handsome young men with lighted torches going ahead of the two friars, calmly opening all the locked doors with a touch of the finger. The youths conducted them to the church of St. Andrew and remained for the singing of Matins, then brought them back again to the bishop's palace. Being told of this, the bishop himself watched the prodigy, and gave the church of St. Andrew to the Order as a local foundation. The ground between the palace and the church of St. Andrew is still called the Angels' Field.

Probably many cities of northern Italy received visits from Dominic as he passed on his journey, but no certain traditions about them have been preserved. Dominic proceeded to the convent of St. Romain in Toulouse. Here the number of the brethren had greatly increased, but the whole district was in a turmoil due to the death of Simon de Montfort and the renewed audacity of the heretics.

The death of Simon de Montfort marked the end of an era in the life of Dominic. De Montfort, a sturdy, sword-wielding Christian, had made his mistakes in life. He died gallantly in battle, at the walls of Toulouse, where even after so much bloodshed the hydra-head of heresy was to lurk for years. His death was that of a brave and thoroughly Christian knight, and he died assured of the prayers of the friars to whom he had been a true benefactor.¹⁰⁴ Dominic, who had baptized de Montfort's daughter and married his son—in a little Gothic chapel one still may see at Fanjeaux—was a personal friend. Toulouse, the stoner of prophets, had killed a warrior who fought for truth in his own fashion, and here in the same lovely, stubborn province, the first Dominicans would shed their blood in the same cause. How much of

this Dominic knew as he went on towards Spain, we do not know. But that he was deeply affected by the death of his friend and by the miseries of the friars in the cradle of the Order, he proved by leaving them the finest help he could think of: Bertrand of Garrigua. He had learned to depend much on the sanctity and good sense of Bertrand, who had proved himself an ideal traveling companion. But Toulouse was in need, and he left his friend there as superior, to encourage and heal—and prepare them for the wrath to come.

Just here on the journey to Spain occurs one of those odd little incidents which are very revealing of times and characters. Dominic had in his company some young novices who had only recently joined the Order.¹⁰⁵ Some writers say they had come from Italy with him; others, that they were Spanish. Whichever they were, they became greatly discouraged, perhaps by the situation in Toulouse, perhaps because closer acquaintance with the rule had brought out its austerity rather starkly. The larger number—we do not know exactly how many—decided to leave him; only three remained. Turning sadly and gently to these three, Dominic quoted the words of our Lord on a similar occasion, “Will you also go away?” Out of the depths of his misery, one of the remaining brethren replied, with a touch of native shrewdness, “God forbid that I should leave the head and follow the feet!” We are assured that nearly all of the novices who left him at this time rejoined him at a later date.

Dominic arrived at Segovia just before Christmas. This was his own homeland, and the sight of familiar scenes after sixteen years of absence must have been a great joy to Dominic. This place was thick with memories of his friendship with Bishop Diego and the long quiet years

of his early life before the call of God had drawn him into the swift current of the apostolate. Perhaps it was something of his natural affection for old scenes and dear associations that fixed this neighborhood for his first foundation on his return to Spain.

Dominic had not been long in the city before he began preaching and great success attended his work. Possibly the familiar ease of his mother tongue, and the sight of his own Spanish hills after the long years of exile gave fresh inspiration to his words. It seemed, too, that God was willing that special tokens of His miraculous power should accompany the preaching of his servant. A long drought had afflicted the country of Segovia and reduced the people to the edge of starvation. One day as they gathered together to hear the preaching of Dominic, he suddenly cried out in the middle of his discourse: "Fear nothing, my brethren, but trust in the divine mercy. I announce to you good news. Today God will send you plentiful rain and the drought shall be turned to plenty." ¹⁰⁶ The rain began falling before he had finished his discourse, and soon became such a torrent that people were drenched before they could get home. As he had prophesied, it gave them an abundant harvest; the place of the miracle is marked today with a little chapel.

He stayed at the house of a poor woman who in the course of his visit managed to get hold of an old hairshirt which he had worn, and which he had just exchanged for a new one. Incidentally, the only new clothes we ever hear of Dominic acquiring were the several hairshirts made by his admirers and exchanged (probably in the shrewd expectation of thus acquiring a valuable relic) for one that he had worn. It opens up a warmly human chapter of his life which would have been lost except for

the testimony of the women at his canonization. The *Vitae Fratrum* records this one incident of the poor woman in Segovia, and goes on to relate that on a later occasion the relic saved her house from fire and was her most treasured possession.¹⁰⁷ But she was not the only one.

The names of the women who testified for the canonization are strange to us: Beceda and Nogueza and their companions, lay and religious. But their reactions are not at all strange, and can be found in any good woman of today or yesterday who is involved (as these women were) in the career of an extraordinary man. They fussed over him and tried to make him eat, complaining that no matter how hard they tried, they could never get him to eat more than a couple of eggs or a little porridge. Women in charge of the hospices where he used to stop on his journeys quickly grew fond of the self-effacing friar who never demanded anything or complained about the service. "I used to fix him a bed," testified one, "but he would never use it. He slept on the floor, and most of the time threw the covers off." She admitted to tiptoeing in to pull the covers over him when he was asleep. There must have been a sort of pious rivalry in the manufacture of hair-shirts. Sister Beceda, a nun of Holy Cross, testified to having gathered hair from the tails of cows in order to make him one, and another lady related that she had made him a hairshirt out of leopard-skin; an interesting garment indeed.¹⁰⁸ The women of Languedoc were famous for their weaving—in fact, the heretics had made use of a sort of weavers' guild to spread their teachings among the women. Probably—although it does not say so in any of the records—the converted heretic women who had joined in the work of Dominic were the people who kept him supplied with clothing. Perhaps it was because he had been a long

time away from these careful and kindly women that he had no habit fit to be buried in when he died in Bologna.

Dominic's preaching soon made him very popular among the Segovians. They were proud of him as a fellow countryman and they flocked to listen to him wherever he appeared. We are told that he never spoke in public without first kneeling in front of an image of our Lady and saying the prayer "*Dignare me laudare te, Virgo sacrata.*" It is with him also, very likely, that the custom began among the Preachers of saying the *Hail Mary* at the beginning of a sermon. He shortly gathered Spanish disciples around him, and made a foundation called the convent of the Holy Cross.¹⁰⁹ It was built on the banks of a river, on the site where Dominic usually addressed the multitudes. Nearby is a little grotto in the rock where he sometimes spent his nights, praying and disciplining himself. The grotto now forms part of the church, and some four hundred years ago was visited by another great Saint, Teresa of Avila, who declared that it was so holy a place she would like to spend her life there.

As soon as the convent of Segovia was secure, Dominic proceeded to Madrid. Here the house was very small and in all ways unsuitable for preaching brethren. He made some necessary changes and moved the brethren out, converting the place into a monastery for women, thus establishing his third foundation for women. He placed his own brother, Mannes, in charge of the house and gave it personal attention until it was on a firm basis. Several other convents were already founded in Spain, but it is not certain what share St. Dominic had in their establishment. There most certainly must have been some perma-

nent arrangement made for the brethren who were removed from the convent of Madrid, but the records are very scanty.

There are several intriguing references to the Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary in Spain at this time.¹¹⁰ Just how closely it was tied in with the Third Order group, then known as the Militia of Jesus Christ and operating—as far as we know—only in southern France and northern Italy, we do not know. There are enough references to support strongly the Dominican tradition of the Rosary in this trip to Spain, but the records we would most like to have are either regrettably vague or have been completely lost. Popular tradition, carefully preserved by the Segovians, makes their Saint the Preacher of the Rosary. It also pictures him as a man whose time was never his own, a man who went through the cities drawing the hearts of people after him like a magnet. So great was his influence that the crowds, who may have been first attracted by his great reputation for miracles, remained to confess that penance, when preached by Master Dominic, was easy. Knowing his own views on penance, one can only marvel at the magnetism that would draw people away from a luxurious life to follow him in austerity.

Dominic must at this time have visited his own family. His mother most likely was dead, and there is one story which insists that he came back to Spain partly in the very natural hope of seeing to it that she had a respectable tomb. Where his father was at this time, history does not say; perhaps he too was dead, for fighting men seldom lived to old age in the thirteenth century. Dominic must also have visited the nieces and nephews who appear so

tantalizingly in our scanty records. It may have been at this time that they determined to follow their famous uncle into the Order.

One touching little incident was recorded by the devoted Sister Cecilia concerning his return from his homeland. When he reached Rome after the long tiring journey, he summoned the nuns to the grille and gave them a little gift which he had carried for them all the way from Spain; a set of little wooden spoons. Their value was small, and quite probably the nuns could have obtained much better ones in Rome. But the thought of his carrying them across the Alps and the Pyrenees and the hot plains of France enriched them in the eyes of the nuns and made ever dearer their memories of this Father who would remember them when he had so many other things on his mind.¹¹¹

Another incident in which one sees his fatherly care of the nuns occurred at about this time, and is related by Theodoric of Apoldia, who must have heard it from Sister Cecilia: "One day the holy man came to the sisters rather late, and having ordered all of them to gather at the grille, he spoke thus in the presence of the brethren: 'My daughters, I have just returned from a fishing trip in which the Lord granted that I should catch a big fish!' He said this about Brother Gandion, the only son of Alexander, a great man of Rome, whom he had received into his society. Then conferring with them, he said many things for their comfort. Afterwards he said to them: 'It seems a good idea that we have a little something to drink,' so he ordered Roger the cellarer to bring a goblet of wine. When it was offered to him, the man of God blessed it, and he himself drank first and then the other brethren who were thirty in number, and the wine was not

in the least diminished. Then the man of God called Sister Nubia and said, 'Go to the turn and take this goblet to the sisters so that they may all have a drink.' She took the goblet, completely full as it was, and not a drop was spilled although it had to pass from hand to hand and went from place to place. The prioress drank first, and then all the other sisters after her, while the most blessed man encouraged them continually that they drink well. The sisters were 104 in number. After each of the brothers and sisters had drunk from the cup of charity, it still remained completely full of wine. After all this had been done, the holy man said, 'The Lord wishes that I should go to Santa Sabina and console my sons.' The prioress, however, and the sisters tried to persuade him to stay because it was now almost midnight and it did not seem a good idea that he should go out. But he did not agree with them, saying, 'The Lord wishes that I should go to my brethren and He will send His angel with us.' Taking with him Brother Tancred who was prior of the brethren, he went out, and, behold! waiting at the gate was a very elegant young man holding a staff in his hand as if prepared for a journey, and he preceded them. . . . When they came to the gate of the brethren, they discovered that it was very carefully locked and barred. Immediately the young man, their guide on the way, opened it and himself went in first, then the brethren and after them the Saint. But the young man having again gone out, the gate was found to be closed. . . . When they entered the church where the brethren were saying the night Office, the brethren wondered who had opened the closed gates for them." ¹¹²

CHAPTER 11

Dominic's Return to Rome

APRIL of 1219 found Dominic once more in Toulouse with the brothers of St. Romain. His presence was joyfully welcomed, and now once more Toulouse was to hear for a little while the mighty eloquence of that voice which had carried the Gospel of peace through the villages of Languedoc. Such crowds flocked to hear him that St. Romain could not contain them; it was in the cathedral church of St. Stephen, before the bishop and chapter, that he was obliged to deliver his sermons. Here he gave himself without reserve to the apostolic calling. All day long he was in the city or in the surrounding country, preaching and instructing the people, and the night was devoted to prayer and penance. Here, too, all his care and devotion were lavished on his brethren and the nuns of Prouille. They could not have known that it was his last earthly visit among them.

A journey to Paris lay before him and Bertrand of Garrigua was his companion. There were also some young novices traveling with him. One marvels at these wandering novitiates that produced such remarkable people. On one occasion during this trip, Dominic changed water into wine for the benefit of these young men who had been delicately nurtured in the world and for whom this first plunge into religious life had been fatiguing.¹¹³ On this journey also we read that his company paid a visit to the shrine of Our Lady of Rocamadour, then one of the most flourishing and famous pilgrimage places in Europe.

Probably Dominic, who had himself come from the mountain country around Roncevalles, felt a flash of national pride to see the hilt of Roland's sword thrust into the great rock beside the shrine of Rocamadour.¹¹⁴ Most certainly he would have spent the night in prayer in this rocky sanctuary, so full of legends of its reputed founder, the small Zaccheus of the Gospel, who had climbed into a sycamore tree to watch Jesus of Nazareth pass by. In such places as this, replete with memories of Gospel characters and sweet with the fragrance of our Lady's blessing, Dominic must have felt very close to her and to her Son. We would like to know more about this visit, but all that history gives us is a brief remark.

The legend of the German pilgrims belongs to this part of the journey, when Dominic and his company were threading their way down from the limestone crags of Rocamadour. The Germans had joined the friars' party most probably at the shrine, and traveled with them for several days as pilgrims often did. The Germans were very hospitable and insisted on sharing their food with the friars. Dominic, who spoke no German, worried because there was nothing they could do for them in return. He suggested to Brother Bertrand that they kneel down and pray for an understanding of the language so that they might refresh the pilgrims spiritually and pay their debt. The gift of tongues was granted to them, and for the remainder of the trip they conversed easily, and greatly edified the German pilgrims.

This was only one of several occasions when Dominic's charity and what we might call his holy ingenuity overcame natural barriers so that he might bring Christ to someone. As they separated from their new friends, Dominic charged Bertrand not to tell anybody about the

miracle because, he said, people might get the idea that they were saints!

Long years after this, Bertrand related the story and also told about two miracles of the rain. They were walking through a cloudburst one day and Dominic, making the sign of the cross, calmly led the way through the torrential downpour.¹¹⁵ All of the party remained dry, in spite of the floods of water that fell around them. Another time, at the end of a long wet day, they lodged at an inn. Everyone but Dominic sought out the fire and tried to get dry; Dominic spent the night in the church. On the following morning his clothes were perfectly dry and everyone else's were still wet.

Dominic stayed only a little while in Paris, but he did several things that were to have great consequences to the Order. He heard the confession of a young man named Jordan of Saxony, and advised him to go on for the priesthood, as he was still only a sub-deacon.¹¹⁶ He set in order a regular house to replace the temporary arrangement that had been in use up to that time, with the brothers following the course of theology and philosophy with the other students at the University of Paris. Dominic's next step was to scatter the brothers; four new French houses drew their members from St. Jacques in Paris, and when he left it, the community was once more small and struggling, with plenty of room to expand. While in Paris, Dominic had the happiness of giving the habit to his old friend, William of Montferrat.

One incident of this visit which seldom gets into the ordinary chronicles was Dominic's interview with Alexander II, King of Scotland.¹¹⁷ This monarch was then at the French capital to arrange a royal marriage. Queen Blanche, mother of St. Louis, had a particular esteem for Brother

Dominic and often invited him to her court. It was here that he met the Scottish king and was requested to send some of his friars to Scotland. Friars were not to reach this kingdom for another ten years, but it was King Alexander who made them welcome when they did come, and who built them several monasteries.

After his brief visit, Dominic once more took the road to Italy, accompanied by William of Montferrat and a lay brother who had come with him from Spain. Passing through Burgundy, he stayed overnight with a poor priest who lodged him hospitably. Dominic richly repaid the hospitality by raising to life the nephew of his host, who fell from a roof while he was there.¹¹⁸ Other miracles of healing also marked his stay in the place, and at Avignon may still be seen traces of a well bearing an inscription to the effect that "in 1219 the Founder of the Friars Preachers blessed this water which has since restored health to many sick persons."¹¹⁹

Dominic's companions were not always such good travelers as he was. We read that as they were making their way through the passes of the Lombard Alps, the Spanish laybrother was overcome with hunger and fatigue. He sat down, unable to move further, and informed Dominic that he was dying of hunger and couldn't take another step. Dominic tried at first to convince him that it wasn't much further; the brother still insisted he couldn't move a step without food. Dominic prayed and then told the brother to go over to a certain rock and take what he found there. The tired brother went to the place indicated and found there a beautiful loaf of bread, apparently freshly baked. Dominic told him to eat it, which he did. He felt his strength renewed. Dominic asked him if he were now able to travel and being assured

that he was, he told him to take the remains of the bread back where he had found it and come along. The brother did as he was told and not until sometime later did he suddenly recall that this had been a peculiar place to find a loaf of fresh bread. Ancestor of all those who ask foolish questions, he ran to Dominic and asked, "But who put that bread there?" Dominic asked him if he hadn't had enough, to which he replied "Yes." Dominic assured him that since that was the case, he had better give thanks to God and not bother about who put it there.

Dominic's road through Italy was marked with new foundations. At Bergamo a shadow fell across his path; he was detained there by a severe illness which was eventually to cause his death. For the time being, it caused him to discontinue his fasting and abstinence, something which had never happened before.¹²⁰ Probably it was a heavenly warning that his time on earth was growing very short. Dominic arrived in Rome in the beginning of 1220.

The first General Chapter of the Order had been fixed for Pentecost, 1220. It was to be held at Bologna at the convent of St. Nicholas, and it would be both a summing-up of the past three years—for we have to remember that the Order was not yet four years old—and a fixing of policy for the uncounted centuries ahead.

The progress of the Order in these first few years was phenomenal; there has been nothing, before or since, to surpass it, and we could hardly believe the records if the historical evidence were not such as to put it beyond all doubt. However, in spite of this tremendous growth, we find nothing in the records of any boasting or of any sense of success. The work was the work of God, and for their own share in it each one, with sincere humility, could have joined in the words of the holy founder as he

stood in the midst of that first assembly of his children, and said "I deserve only to be dismissed from among you for I have grown cold and relaxed and am no longer of any use." ¹²¹

CHAPTER 12

The Third Order

THERE are several quite reasonable and attractive theories to account for the foundation of the Dominican Third Order. We would be very happy to know which, if any, of these theories is correct, but as a matter of fact we do not.

Most commonly the beginning of the lay apostolate, the secular Third Order, is assigned to the very early years of the mission of St. Dominic in Languedoc, where he wrestled at such close quarters with heresy of the Albigensians.¹²² Here the property of the Church was under attack in a particularly vicious way; churches were being burned, lands confiscated. The situation would seem to have called for a battery of armed and dedicated fighting men, pledged to use their swords and their properties in the service of the Church. Knowing Dominic's tendency to look a situation squarely in the eye and fight it with appropriate weapons, we would be inclined to think that this is as good an explanation as any of the beginnings of that large and useful branch of the Order.

Those who follow this theory explain it quite simply. St. Dominic came into France like a fresh breeze, blowing away the fogs of heresy and indifference with which it is periodically cursed and which were at that time so devastating. Lay people of all stations wished to join him in some way—not as preachers, for that was a work he was doing well himself; but as lay helpers, bound by a less strict prayer-obligation which was consistent with their

way of life. So the group was organized on the style of the military orders: the dedication of one's sword, the vows consistent with the single or the married state, as individual cases required. (In the military orders, for the most part, only unmarried members were permitted.) The secular Third Order—to give it the modern name—gave to zealous Christians a field for apostolic work and also that dearly-coveted privilege of working with a saint and sharing in his works and merits. The saints always drew friends around them, and Dominic—let us never forget—worked *among people*, in the streets, the lecture halls, and the universities. Many of these people were not clerics, and their association would have to be on a non-clerical basis.

France was not the only spot infected with a heresy that lived by violence. Lombardy, that strong-minded section of Italy which today is a hotbed of Communism, began with the first preachers to establish its reputation as a land of martyrs.¹²³ Here it was a question of politics and religion, hopelessly scrambled so that at this distance we cannot hope to unscramble them.¹²⁴ It was without question a field for a dedicated militia. And here, according to some of the old writers, St. Dominic made the first foundation of what is today the secular Third Order. It may be that he did, or it may be that writers have confused his Third Order with that of St. Peter Martyr, which later merged with it.¹²⁵ We do not know.

Father Mandonnet supports the theory that the Third Order began at the Monastery of St. Agnes in Bologna. He says: "In spite of Blessed Raymond of Capua's ingenious argument for the Third Order of St. Dominic as being originally the 'White Confraternity' or 'Militia of Jesus Christ,' the evolution cannot be admitted. Bologna

claims the honor of being the birthplace of the Third Order in a very rudimentary and undeveloped form such as it had in the lifetime of St. Dominic. The first tertiary was Blessed Diana d'Andalo, through whose influence with her wealthy grandfather, Pietro Lovello, the ground close to the friars' second foundation of St. Nicholas of the Vineyards in Bologna was, in March, 1219, granted to Blessed Reginald, then prior of Santa Maria della Mascarella, their first house in Bologna. Blessed Diana 'made profession' to St. Dominic and lived henceforth almost like a religious in the world."¹²⁶ Without knowing more than we do know about the type of vows that Diana took at this time, it would be impossible to test this theory, but to support it there is the strange evidence of the pious ladies connected with Diana's convent who frequently came in for an exhortation in her letters from Jordan, and who were at one time deprived of the privilege of wearing the habit—but what habit? On present evidence it cannot be proved one way or the other.

Father Bede Jarrett throws an interesting light on the term "Third Order," which most of us accept as meaning the Third Order founded by St. Dominic. He says: "Pope Innocent III . . . was grieved at the sight of so much zeal wasted to the Church, and in 1207 devised his own expedient for ending the trouble. He first of all created a religious order of monks for any among these preachers who would agree to monastic life. . . . But many . . . of the preaching brotherhood could not at all fit themselves into monastic life. Some were married, most had their own business to attend to during the week-day hours, some were in service or in agricultural pursuits or bred to the profession of arms. . . . Rome answered (this

need) by originating the Third Order . . . which, however, lasted a very short time as an independent organization, but out of which spread the whole body of the friars. It was the Third Order, for it was not monastic nor canonical, the two great types of religious life so far established in the Church. . . . It was allowed only to preach penitence. Hence the full title of this new organization was 'THE THIRD ORDER OF PENANCE.' " 127

There is no very good reason why all of these theories could not be true. Having found that the system worked in one place, it would be only natural to try it in another. Spain fought the Moors; Lombardy, the Manicheans; Albi, the Catharists; and the North a variety of pagans and schismatics. The very diversity of the enemy they fought would preclude any international organization with a settled headquarters. We should very much like to know when and where our warlike ancestors were first forged into a fighting arm of the Church; but we do not. When even the preachers and the nuns, who had a fixed abode and some place to keep records, did not keep them, let us not be surprised to discover that the tertiaries, fluid as the society was, did not keep records either.

Blessed Emily Bicchieri is credited with founding the first conventual house of the Third Order, in 1256. Constance of Russia made a Third Order foundation of conventual sisters in Lemberg in 1285 or 1286. Exactly how these differed from the Second Order convents of the time, it is hard to tell. But the distinction was carefully made in the records, that these sisters belonged to the *Third Order*. Since Lemberg was directly in the path of the Tartar invasions, it might have been a question of solemn vows; but Blessed Emily's foundation was in

Italy where there were already any number of cloisters. These foundations add several intriguing question-marks to an already puzzling situation.

We should like to know how the first tertiary groups were organized, and with what end in view. The work of the men—at least during the military phase of the society—was cut out for them, and it was violent work, allied to that of the Hospitallers and the Templars, except that they fought in Christian Europe rather than in the Holy Land. But what was planned for the wives and daughters of these dedicated knights, and the widows who could give full time to the apostolate? One element in the foundation of Prouille gives us a clue, for Prouille, even though cloistered, was partly occasioned by the desperate need of teachers for the daughters of Catholics endangered by heresy. St. Dominic seems to have believed from as early as 1206 that there was a definite place for women in his plan for world conquest, and it had to do with the arts that are always associated with women in the home: teaching and nursing in all their forms. With the growth of the secular Third Order, perhaps it seemed easier for such women to teach instead of the cloistered sisters, who must depend on a boarding-school arrangement for their pupils. The women of the secular Third Order were more mobile and more able to reach the girls who needed them. Many thousands of today's Third Order sisters would be happy to know more about the first tertiaries who taught, the first ones who nursed and took care of orphans and visited prisons. Genevieve of Siena, born in 1242, was taught from the age of three by a "pious tertiary" who evidently wore the habit. By the time of St. Catherine of Siena, 150 years later, there was nothing unusual about the tertiaries doing this type of charitable work. But

who first began this form of giving to others the fruits of their contemplation we simply do not know.¹²⁸ We wish we did.

Of individual tertiaries we know more, since some of them were very holy folk whose memory was held in benediction among their townspeople. Several of them were canonized or beatified. Others became part of the living legend of their countries. One of these people about whom we wish we had more information was a woman named Benita, or Bona. After Blessed Reginald departed from Bologna in 1219, St. Dominic stayed for a while to work in the cities of northern Italy. In Florence he met Benita. She had been for some time tormented by the devil and was leading a very irregular life. St. Dominic delivered her from the devil and "gave her the veil." Since at that time there was no Dominican monastery in Florence and Sister Benedicta, as she was afterwards called, was apparently given the tertiary habit, it looks very much as though she, too, has contributed some element to the building of that vast army of Third Order warriors who wield, not the sword, but the thermometer and the textbook. The anecdote is passed over vaguely in the early chronicles, as if it were only one of the countless miracles worked by the Saint (as it probably was). No one could foresee then that we of this generation would be so curious about it.

Today's vast and complex system of government did not, obviously, exist in the thirteenth century, in any branch of Church or State. It is interesting to note, however, that even then, when life was restricted to slow-motion travel on one hemisphere, in a Europe still loosely linked by a common language and government and by one Church, anyone could have laid the foundations

for our present-day jet-propelled existence. The nuns, as Dominic placed them in the cloisters of Prouille, St. Sixtus and Madrid, were cloistered and practiced all the austerities of the monastic life. Yet, through his varied tertiary organization, he left the way clear to our contemporary religious life, where Sisters are professionally trained and must compete professionally in a complicated world. Some day perhaps we will find the missing link that shows an unbroken path back to that remarkable man who saw beyond the centuries and built for worlds unseen.

The best we can say on present evidence is that at some time not now determinable, at some place we cannot now name exactly, St. Dominic began the largest and most varied branch of his Order. Third Order teaching and nursing Sisters could not have functioned in his day, because no such institution existed in the Church, or, in fact, could exist at that time. Religious women up to his time had been cloistered women. To a certain extent they were women who retreated from the world and gave it no more thought except in prayer, and a completely Catholic Europe accepted their vocation as a necessary part of the prayer-life of the Church. The divided world of three hundred years later would bring up other problems that did not exist in the world of St. Dominic. The works of charity (which we know as the spiritual and corporal works of mercy) were taken care of by pious widows who could count on the chaperonage of brothers or fathers to give them social standing in a world that did not consider woman's place anywhere but at her own hearthside. Even in the time of St. Catherine, only older women were admitted to the *Mantellate*, and we are indebted to a bad case of smallpox for one of the Order's

greatest saints. In view of all this, it is consoling to know that Dominic was not only a great saint but also a man of genius, who built for times and places and situations that did not exist in his lifetime. For the worlds as yet undiscovered, a great force of contemplatives-in-action would be needed, many of them women; all would be required to meet educational and professional requirements that differed widely from those of the thirteenth century. It was St. Dominic who gave Catholic women a definite place in the apostolate of truth, and prepared the way for a great new weapon against the heresies of new lands and other times. No one in the history of the Church—as even prejudiced historians grudgingly admit—was such a master at “fighting fire with fire,” as the man who in such a short time provided for so many varied workers in the vineyard of Christ.

As we mentioned, records are painfully few. We get occasional tantalizing glimpses of individuals who belonged to the Third Order and whose virtues were noted even by contemporaries. Margaret of Ypres, who died in that city in 1237, had worn the tertiary habit at home for ten years, which brings her reception back almost to the time of St. Dominic.¹²⁹ Research now being done on her life may yield valuable information concerning the first tertiaries—how they lived, what they wore, what they did—during the first twenty years of the Order’s existence, before any of the founder’s ideas had faded or been discarded. Margaret’s confessor—may heaven bless him for his diligence!—has quite thoroughly chronicled all these things.

The evidence, then, indicates that St. Dominic began—or at any rate authorized—the practice of wearing the habit (some sort of habit) outside the cloister by women

who were vowed to that kind of apostolate. There is considerable evidence to prove that a group of women gathered around the convent of Blessed Diana in Bologna and shared to some extent in the religious life while remaining in the world. In Prouille, where the need for teachers was desperate, the cloistered nuns were detailed to teach; one does not read anywhere that the nuns at either St. Sixtus or Madrid were to do so. The foundress of the Third Order conventual sisters is generally conceded to be Blessed Emily Bicchieri, who opened a Third Order monastery at Vercelli in 1256. Out of all these diverse elements the present Third Order was formed. Sisters living in community today and carrying on the good works of the Church owe a debt of gratitude, not only to the conventual foundresses, but also to those solitary figures who worked, as St. Dominic himself did, among the people of the towns.

It is a tribute to the everlasting genius of a founder whose physical boundaries were the coast of Africa and the Atlantic Ocean that he provided in our times for an apostolate to a much larger world. Even then he must have seen the fields white for the harvest, since he gave us a form of religious life that would cope with the needs of the twentieth century—or the thirtieth.

CHAPTER 13

First General Chapter

"THE joint action of St. Dominic and the Papacy created a militia wholly devoted to the apostolic life, that is, to the religious development and sanctification of souls. In Dominic the medieval world realized its first great type of apostle; in fact, no one before him had consecrated his whole strength and his whole life to the sole and permanent mission of preaching the Gospel." ¹³⁰

The first General Chapter of the Order was called in Bologna on May 27, 1220. Our best account of it is from the pen of Jordan of Saxony, the talented young Bachelor from the University of Paris, who had been chosen as a delegate to the Chapter after only two months in the Order. We do not know the names of most of the Capitular Fathers; France, Spain, Italy and Poland had representatives there. Through the eyes of Jordan we know some of the things they talked about and the measures that were discussed and voted on.

The first and most urgent need was for a written rule, a wider application of the Rule of St. Augustine which gave definite character to the type of work in the Order. Blessed Humbert tells us that one of the reasons for choosing the Rule of St. Augustine was its adaptability: "For, since it contains little more than certain spiritual exhortations and recommendations dictated by reason, a character not marked in other rules, all the statutes pertaining to the state of preaching can be added to it." ¹³¹ St. Dominic had himself given form to the so-called

"primitive rule," and the Fathers had earnestly observed it; so earnestly, we are led to believe, that the holy patriarch found it necessary at this very Chapter to stress that the rules (by which he obviously means his own primitive rule, not the Rule of St. Augustine) do not bind under pain of sin, only under penalty. For the benefit of scrupulous folk, he adds strongly that "if any were to believe the contrary, he would himself without waste of time go through the cloisters to cut all the rules to pieces with a knife."¹³² Now, with the combined experience and legal talents of his sons around him, Dominic knew that it was time to lay down the definitive outlines of the vast future he planned for his Order. It was a tremendously important moment for the Order and for the Church, and we must be eternally grateful to those first legislators, even if we do not know their names.

Dominic had a plan of his own which he wanted to put into execution. The appointment of the abbot, Matthew of France, had not proved consistent with the Dominican ideal as it was already shaping up. The new title of "Master General" had not yet come into common usage, but the idea was more in keeping with that ideal. It was to be a purely elective office, and a temporary one. Dominic thought that it would be both wise and expedient to try out the principle of democratic government immediately and elect someone else to head the Order. He felt himself to be unworthy, and there was another, more personal reason; if he were free, he could go to Tartary. He presented this astounding idea to the Capitular Fathers. They, with grim humor, applied his own principle vigorously, and voted the measure down completely! The incident demonstrated that the balance of power theory was correct; no future Master General could assume power

that did not belong to him. It also indicated the wisdom of the Fathers, who knew they had a saint at their head and intended to keep him there.

At this time a renunciation was made of all lands and possessions, and it was resolved that nothing should be accepted in the future except the daily alms needed for support. Conditions in later centuries were to modify this, a modification made possible by the Order's understanding of poverty as a means subordinated to the furtherance of preaching. Poverty was at the time a very touchy subject in all religious orders; at one extreme were the magnificent abbeys belonging to the older orders, built through the patience and skill of the monks in some cases, and in some cases gifts of noble penitents or benefactors. There had always been abuses at this end of the scale; there probably always will be. There were also abuses at the opposite end, among the wandering beggars who openly scorned the very idea of personal property as an evil. St. Francis and his love for Lady Poverty almost, but not quite, redeemed the anti-clerical and anti-traditional hordes of popular preachers; he was a saint, and his poverty had something divine about it. But leaders of other bands of wandering preachers were not saints, and their views on property created much mischief. Hence it was that all the orders took the occasion to examine their views on the question. St. Dominic felt strongly about poverty, as it seemed to him a necessary part of the apostolate. The matter arose with demand for settlement at the time of the Chapter.

One of the fifteenth century chroniclers records that some of the brethren, coming in to attend the Chapter, had been riding fine horses, which they left in obscure stables while they went to discuss the Order's business.

Dominic heard about the horses and had them all brought out and sold at auction, to make sure they got the point about ownership of property. This incident does not appear in any of the early lives, and may be only an "example" told many years later to bring out his views on poverty.¹³³

However, the question of poverty occupied a great deal of the deliberations of the Chapter. Dominic wished to free the priests from all responsibilities which would interfere with their preaching, and he felt that the business incidental to running a house could be best carried on by laybrothers. He proposed this plan to the brethren who, after a lively discussion with illustrations from other orders that had tried this plan, voted it out completely. Dominic was disappointed, but even this example of the discomforts of democracy did not turn him against his practice of allowing the brethren to vote on such matters.

However, in the interest of studies, he prescribed that the prayers were to be said "with dignity, attention and devotion," but without the time-consuming ceremonies so dear to the monastic orders. Manual work was to have no definite part in the Order except so far as it was necessary to obtain food or clothing. In this, he deviated sharply from the policies of the orders sprung from Benedictine roots, in which work—manual work in the fields—played such an important part. Only a part of his reason was expediency—the fact that he was founding an Order which would work principally in the cities—and the rest was the quite definite conviction that his was an Order in which preaching had first place. In this the brethren heartily agreed with him.

Regulations were made regarding the cells, which were

to be simple and clean, and to contain nothing superfluous. A crucifix and an image of the Blessed Virgin should be in each. They also discussed the forthcoming General Chapters and decided to hold them alternately at Paris and Bologna at yearly intervals. The expansion of the Order took up a good deal of time and discussion. Scotland, Ireland and England were asking for friars, and the Chapter voted to send them as soon as possible. Morocco and several of the countries of the Near East were likewise begging for missionaries. Here, since both the need and the danger were greater, the brethren would be sent first.

Guiraud believes that the rule of the nuns came in for some discussion at this Chapter. There were by this time three foundations of nuns demanding some attention legally; we know little about their rules, except that they paralleled, as far as possible, the rule of the friars. Since the situation was quite different in Prouille, Rome and Madrid, we may safely suppose that Dominic, always a practical man, would have made regulations to care for their varied needs.¹³⁴ However, we do not have any copy of these important early documents. Perhaps they were lost during the years when Prouille was abandoned, or destroyed by titled looters at the time it was made a royal abbey. In Rome and Madrid, likewise, governmental crises could have destroyed democratic documents. Dominican ideals never set well with tyrants. Perhaps, by one of those unpredictable research miracles, the rule of the nuns may yet be found. Or perhaps it was never written down at all, though this is hard to believe. We can only guess. It seems safe to agree with Guiraud on this, however: St. Dominic had made definite plans for his organ-

ization and the nuns were a part of the plan. It would be most natural for him to have discussed his ideas on their rule at the Chapter.¹³⁵

The preaching against the heretics, which had first called the Order into being, received much attention at this time. Both in the old mission of Languedoc, where they had begun their preaching, and in the north of Italy, where the work was still new, the brethren were suffering from the murderous attacks of the heretics. Steps were determined upon for fighting the two different but related heresies that made these two preaching fields so cancerous, and probably ways and means—for instance, the use of the vernacular in preaching instead of Latin—came in for discussion.

We do not know how long the Chapter sat. In fact, for such an important and decisive force in our history, we know precious little about it. We know that by the end of the summer, Dominic was in Bologna once more and the Chapter was over.

Dominic was in Bologna for the Feast of the Assumption, and just at this point we have a little incident which shows his views on poverty. Perhaps it was because he had just come from the discussion of religious poverty at the General Chapter that he was so horrified to see the new convent in construction at Bologna. The procurator, Rudolph of Faenza, was promptly called to account. "Will you build palaces while I am yet living?" asked Dominic. "If you do, you will bring ruin on the Order."¹³⁶ So stern were his words that for the rest of his life nobody dared to finish the building. Not another stone was laid. Bologna must have been having a building boom at this time, for the same story is told of St. Francis, though the Franciscan house must have been an even worse

violation of poverty, because Francis came over to stay with the Dominicans, saying that he found their house more to his taste!

On the Feast of the Assumption, when he first arrived in Bologna, Dominic was in conversation with a Cistercian prior who was a close friend. Dominic confided to him that he had never asked anything of God in prayer that he did not receive it. "Then," said the prior, "I am surprised that you do not ask for the vocation of Master Conrad the German, whom the brethren have desired for a long time to become one of them." That night Dominic and the prior kept vigil in the church. Just as they began the hour of Prime, the aforementioned Conrad came into the choir and asked for the habit.¹³⁷

Among the outstanding students who entered the Order at this time was John of Vicenza.¹³⁸ Hearing Dominic preach, he gave up all thought of the law and, receiving the habit, followed Dominic to Bologna where he made his novitiate. Another even more famous disciple in Bologna was the young Peter of Verona, who was to become the Order's proto-martyr. Sometimes the sudden vocations of these promising young men caused great violence among their relatives. One young student, just received to the habit, was told by his family that he would be carried out of the Order bodily. Dominic's friends advised him to get protection from the city authorities. His reply was typical: "We do not need them. There are more than two hundred angels standing around us guarding us from our enemies." ¹³⁹

Occasionally these threats were actually carried out. One young novice named Thomas of Pagilo was kidnapped by his family, who dragged him to a neighboring vineyard, stripped off his habit and clothed him in his

former worldly garments. Dominic betook himself to the church and to prayer. Suddenly the young man frightened his relatives by crying out: "They are burning me! The clothes are burning me! Take these from me and give me back my habit!" ¹⁴⁰ His relatives ran away frightened and he made his way back to the convent with all haste. Once more clothed in the white woolen tunic, he felt no more misery from the burning clothes.

From a student of the University who served Dominic's Mass we have testimony about the power surrounding the Saint's person. He said that he had kissed Dominic's hand and that a divine fragrance was perceptible, which had the power of delivering him from grievous temptations with which he had been tormented.¹⁴¹

That the devil made trouble for the brethren is not a fable, even making allowances for the medieval imagination. During St. Dominic's visit to Spain, the evil spirit had been busy in Bologna, upsetting the brethren at their prayers and setting people against them. At St. Sixtus he appeared to the nuns under several forms, trying to distract them while St. Dominic preached to them. At worst, he frightened them badly, and at best he got them all to giggling. At each of his new attempts to worry the holy preacher, Dominic vanquished him. But their personal feud had been long and—to say the least—uncomfortable.

The *Lives of the Brethren*, that quaint medieval record of the early men and wonders of the Order, gives many incidents of Dominic's close contact with the unseen world of the spirit. If one is to understand these accounts literally, he devoted little if any time to sleeping, but spent his nights in prayer in various parts of the house. Walking through the corridors late at night, he sometimes met the devil, there on some unpleasant errand of his own.

The fiend admitted that he loved the parlor and greatly disliked the chapter room, because of the relative gains he made there. Sometimes he stood grinning under a lamp, reading the brethren's sins from a scorched paper which the Saint made haste to snatch away and destroy. Sometimes he merely prowled around, in a way that makes us very uneasy to read about it, annoying this or that religious who had some trifle on his conscience. These accounts give us the impression that no matter how alert the devil was to do his evil work, Dominic was even more alert, and he had, on his side, the help of the Queen of Heaven.

The *Vitae Fratrum* relates a wryly amusing story of a brother who was deluded by private mysticism, being rescued from the devil: "One of the brothers in the convent of Paris gave himself up entirely to prayer, to the detriment of his studies and his teaching. The devil was also in the habit of coming to him, feigning to be the Blessed Virgin, at one time praising his state of soul, and at another revealing future events. The brother happened to mention this fact to Brother Peter of Rheims, who was prior at the time, and was advised to spit in the face of the phantom if it appeared again. 'For if it be the Blessed Virgin,' said he, 'she will not be vexed, being always most humble of heart; nay, she will excuse you on account of your obedience. While, if it be the father of lies, he is proud and will make off in confusion.' The brother did what he was told and spat accordingly, upon which the devil roared in anger, 'Curses on you, where did you learn such bad manners?' He went off ashamed of himself, and never ventured to come again." ¹⁴²

Sometimes Dominic would meet our Lady, going about the convent like a tidy housewife and a careful mother, looking after the brethren. Sometimes she sprinkled them

with holy water as they slept. Accompanying her were various of the saints so loved in the Middle Ages—Agnes Martyr, Cecilia, Catherine of Alexandria, Mary Magdalen. The visits were not official, they were motherly. And after all these troubled centuries, so poignant are those pictures of her early love and care, Dominicans still feel her presence in their silent corridors. It is Sister Cecilia who gives us the most memorable picture of this motherly care, when she relates in her narrative: “One night, Dominic having remained in the church to pray, left it at the hour of midnight, and entered the corridor where were the cells of the brethren. When he had finished what he had come to do, he again began to pray at one end of the dormitory, and looking by chance towards the other end, he saw three ladies coming along, of whom the one in the middle appeared the most beautiful and venerable. One of her companions carried a magnificent vessel of water, and the other a sprinkler, which she presented to her mistress, and she sprinkled the brethren, and made over them the sign of the cross. But when she had come to one of the friars, she passed him over without blessing him; and Dominic having observed who this one was, went before the lady, who was already in the middle of the dormitory, near to where the lamp was hanging. He fell at her feet, and though he had already recognized her, yet he besought her to tell him who she was. At that time the beautiful and devout anthem of the *Salve Regina* was not sung in the convents of the friars or of the sisters at Rome; it was only recited, kneeling, after Compline. The lady who had given the blessing said therefore to Dominic, ‘I am she whom you invoke every evening, and when you say *Eia ergo advocata nostra*, I prostrate before my Son for the preservation of this Order.’ Then the blessed Dominic

inquired who were the two young maidens who accompanied her, and she replied, 'One is Cecilia, and the other Catherine.' And the Blessed Dominic asked again why she had passed over one of the brethren without blessing him; and she was answered, 'Because he was not in a fitting posture'; and so, having finished her round, and sprinkled the rest of the brethren, she disappeared. Now the blessed Dominic returned to pray in the place where he was before, and scarcely had he begun to pray when he was wrapt in spirit unto God. And he saw the Lord, with the Blessed Virgin standing on His right hand; and it seemed to him that our Lady was dressed in a robe of sapphire blue. And, looking about him, he saw religious of every order standing before God; but of his own he did not see one. Then he began to weep bitterly, and he dared not draw nigh to our Lord, or to His Mother; but our Lady beckoned him with her hand to approach. Nevertheless, he did not dare to come until our Lord also in His turn had made him a sign to do so. He came, therefore, and fell prostrate before them, weeping bitterly. And the Lord commanded him to rise; and when he was risen, He said to him, 'Why weepest thou thus bitterly?' And he answered, 'I weep because I see here religious of all orders except mine own.' And the Lord said to him, 'Wouldst thou see thine own?' And he, trembling, replied, 'Yes, Lord.' Then the Lord placed His hand on the shoulder of the Blessed Virgin, and said to the blessed Dominic, 'I have given thine Order to My Mother.' Then He said again, 'And wouldst thou really see thine Order?' And he replied, 'Yea, Lord.' Then the Blessed Virgin opened the mantle in which she seemed to be dressed, and extending it before the eyes of Dominic, so that its immensity covered all the space of the heavenly country, he saw under its folds

a vast multitude of his friars. The blessed Dominic fell down to thank God and the Blessed Mary, His Mother, and the vision disappeared, and he came to himself again, and rang the bell for Matins; and when Matins were ended, he called them all together, and made them a beautiful discourse on the love and veneration they should bear to the most Blessed Virgin, and related to them this vision." ¹⁴³

CHAPTER 14

Last Testament

SHORTLY before the Feast of Pentecost, 1221, a group of friars proceeded along the road to Bologna. A stranger joined them and engaged them in conversation. They told him they were on their way to the second General Chapter of the Order, and he inquired of them what they intended to discuss there. "Oh, the new provinces," they told him vaguely. "England, and Hungary, and possibly Greece." Hearing this, the stranger gave a loud howl of Satanic anguish and shrieked, "Your Order will be my destruction! I was happy there until you came!" ¹⁴⁴ The legend goes on to tell us that the stranger dissolved in a cloud of sulphur smoke, leaving the friars thoughtful and thankful. It was in this mood of thoughtfulness and thankfulness that the brethren gathered for the Chapter. Much had happened in the past five years.

If Jordan of Saxony had been present at this Chapter, we might have a much clearer account of what transpired there, but he was not in attendance. The Chapter appointed him Provincial of Lombardy, and chose a young canonist from Bologna, Paul of Hungary, to lead the mission band into Hungary. So eager were they to begin this mission that lay so close to the Founder's heart, that the company set out for the north before the Chapter was over, on a path that everyone knew would end in martyrdom. Perhaps—though no one says so in so many words—they were still afraid that Dominic would find some way to slip from them, to the missions of the north.

Dominic himself knew that he was soon to go to a further land than Tartary. The fever that had struck him down at Bergamo was a warning to the brethren which they fearfully tried to ignore. Dominic had been warned by a heavenly voice that his time on earth was nearly over; he had fought the good fight, and had nearly run his course. Undoubtedly this knowledge gave special unction to his address to the Chapter.

In this exhortation he gave thanks to God for the progress of the Order, which had by now expanded to eight large provinces. He encouraged the sending of friars to England, where with Oxford they would complete their alliance with the three great university centers of Europe and guarantee that a high proportion of the religious thinkers of the future would be Dominicans. Most of all, he exhorted them to study, deeply and prayerfully, all sacred learning, but especially theology and Holy Scripture. He suggested that they carry with them at all times a copy of the Gospels and of the Epistles of St. Paul, fit armor for a warrior of God. In a letter commonly attributed to St. Dominic at this time and addressed to the Province of Poland, it is nicely summed up: "Let us apply ourselves with energy to the great actions which God demands of us." ¹⁴⁵ There was never to be anything small about Dominican activities; he would be the first to admit that they were huge tasks and took great energy.

The primitive rule was by this time in a definite form; Dominic would not go and leave his children unprovided for in spiritual riches. The rule had certain unquestionable innovations which experience had proved practical. Father Mandonnet says: "From its inception, the rule of St. Dominic was precise, vigorous, sound, clearly organized, and well adapted to the work which it pursued; and it

was characterized by the essential features that it would preserve. From these qualities it derived a mighty impulse for conquest. Born of its own age, it was the product of ripe experience; thus in two successive stages, within four years, the clear genius of St. Dominic endowed society and the Church with a rule so well planned that it had only to develop according to its own power in order to govern and place at the service of Christendom an army of preachers that increased rapidly. . . . Soon, extending beyond the limits of the Order, the rule of St. Dominic began to radiate an influence on other religious foundations that were groping, sometimes in the dark and often in dangerous bypaths far from their true end, for an answer to the unrest, if not to the needs, of contemporary Christian society.”¹⁴⁶ Dominic had established his children as a great teaching Order, his most famous son would one day state the fact that “it is better to illumine than merely to shine.”¹⁴⁷ Now there remained for him only to finish his earthly course. He very nearly died where he had spent so much of his life—on the road.

Outwardly there was nothing about his last missionary journey that should cause anyone to worry. He was his own cheerful self as he left Bologna at the end of May. The Chapter had ended a few days before, but he had remained in the city to please the citizens, who wished to honor him with the rights of citizenship—possibly the medieval equivalent of giving one the keys of the city. When the civic ceremony had been completed, he took his usual luggage—his Scripture copy and his staff—and set out for Venice.

At Venice he arranged for the foundation of the convent of Sts. John and Paul, and had a visit with his old friend Cardinal Hugh Conti. Perhaps some comment of

the old man—who was well along in years and must have considered Dominic as being very young—brought out the prophetic remark from the tired friar: “You see me now in health, but before the next Feast of the Assumption I shall be with God.”¹⁴⁸ Jordan tells us that he had received a warning before he left Bologna that his death was at hand. If Dominic did know that he was soon to die, it made no difference at all in the schedule of work he laid out for himself. This, and the fact that he did not seem any different—only, perhaps, a little tired—deceived the brethren who were with him. Only when he returned to Bologna in August did the brethren there point out the shocking change in the athlete of Christ.

In two months he seemed to have aged considerably; the hair was thinning on his temples and gray was sprinkled here and there in his dark tonsure. It was a very hot summer, and the humid air seemed to drain all the energy from him. Though he was evidently suffering from heat exhaustion as well as fever, he persisted in following his plan to stop and preach at Milan and at all the principal stations between Venice and Bologna. They came into Bologna slowly and painfully, and reached St. Nicholas of the Vineyards at dusk on the sixth of August.

The brethren at St. Nicholas pressed around him and tried to get him to go to bed. In spite of his fatigue, he talked with the prior and the procurator until after midnight, then went into the church to pray until time for Matins. His strength was obviously ebbing away as he stood among them for the last time, listening to the magnificent psalms of Matins. When the Office was finished, he could no longer stand. His head was swimming with pain, but he had energy enough to resist their kindness

when they tried to get him into a bed; he insisted on being laid on some sacking which was laid upon the ground. They knew, then, that this was death, and nothing could hold their beloved Father back from it.

Dominic desired that the novices be called around him that he might speak to them for the last time. In spite of his evident pain and distress, his patience and sweetness had never been more marked. The pallor of death could not change the joyous expression of his face. The brethren surrounded him, trying not to weep openly. Someone thought that a change of air might help, so they laid him on a poor stretcher and carried him to the top of a nearby hill, to the churchyard of St. Mary of the Mountain, where the air of the August night was cooler.

Dominic submitted uncomplainingly to the well-intentioned move that must have cost him so much additional discomfort. He knew that all their efforts would be in vain, but he did not like to tell them so. When it occurred to him that he might die before they could get him back to St. Nicholas, he called them all around him so that they might hear his last testament. There on the hilltop, surrounded by the soft noises of the night and the stifled voice of weeping, he gave utterance to the testament he was leaving to his children:

“Have charity one for another;

Guard humility;

Make your treasure out of voluntary poverty.” ¹⁴⁹

He went on to tell them: “You know that to serve God is to reign; but you must serve Him in love and with a whole heart. It is only by a holy life and by fidelity to your rule that you can do honor to your profession.” He continued to speak to them for some time. Years later,

Brother Ventura was to describe the touching scene. "I never heard him speak a more excellent or edifying sermon," he said.¹⁵⁰

At this point the rector of St. Mary of the Mountain made a suggestion which shocked the dying man into a last effort. The rector was something of an opportunist, and he foresaw a great blessing on his doorstep. He could not resist remarking, in Dominic's hearing, that he was happy to have a saint die in his churchyard, because then he could be buried there. Dominic made a last effort to rouse himself, and stated plainly, "I will be buried nowhere but under the feet of my brethren! Take me home to the vineyard, and no one will be able to oppose my being buried among my own." Sorrowing and probably thoroughly exasperated at the tactless rector, the brethren once more lifted the rough stretcher and carried him back to the hot valley below. They did not want to leave him out of doors, so they brought him into Brother Moneta's cell. He had none of his own.

The dying man had already received extreme unction at St. Mary of the Mountain. He rested quietly for about an hour. Then he spoke to the prior. "Prepare," he said, indicating that it was time for the recommendation for a departing soul. Then he told them to wait a little. It was perhaps during this time that, according to the revelation made to St. Brigid, the Mother of God, to whom he had ever shown himself so loyal and loving a servant, visibly appeared to him and promised that she would never withdraw her patronage and protection from his Order.

He was now sinking rapidly, and they saw that the end was very near. Brother Rudolph held his head and gently

wiped the death-sweat from his forehead. Brother Ventura bent over him saying: " 'Dear Father, you leave us desolate and afflicted; remember us, and pray for us to God.' Then the dying Saint summoned his fast-failing strength and, raising his hands and eyes to heaven, he said in a clear and distinct voice: 'Holy Father, since by Thy mercy I have ever fulfilled Thy will, and have kept and preserved those whom Thou hast given me, now I recommend them to Thee. Do Thou keep them; do Thou preserve them.' Then, turning to his children, he added tenderly: 'Do not weep, my children; I shall be more useful to you where I am now going, than I have ever been in this life.' One of them again asking him to tell them exactly where he should be buried, he replied in his former words: 'Under the feet of my brethren.' He seemed then for the first time to perceive that they had laid him on a kind of bed, and obliged them to remove him, and place him on ashes on the floor. The novices left the room, and about twelve of the older brethren alone remained beside him. He made his general confession to Father Ventura, and when it was finished, he added, addressing himself to the others: 'Thanks be to God, whose mercy has preserved me in perfect virginity until this day; if you would keep chastity, guard yourselves from all dangerous conversations, and watch over your own hearts.' But, an instant afterwards, a kind of scruple seemed to seize him; and he turned to Ventura with a touching humility, saying: 'Father, I fear lest I have sinned in speaking of this grace before our brethren.' The recommendation of his soul now began, and he followed the prayers as well as he could; they could see his lips moving, and as they recited the words, '*Subvenite, sancti Dei; occurrere, angeli Domini, suscipi-*

entes animam ejus, offerentes eam in conspectu Altissimi, he stretched his arms to heaven, and expired, being in the fifty-first year of his age.

“His weeping children stood for awhile around the body, without venturing to touch the sacred remains; but as it became necessary to prepare for the interment, they began to strip off the tunic in which he died, and which was not his own, but one belonging to Brother Moneta; and having done so, their tears of tenderness flowed afresh, for they discovered an iron chain tightly bound round his waist, and from the scars and marks it had produced, it was evident that it had been worn for many years. Rudolph removed it with the utmost reverence, and it was afterwards delivered to Blessed Jordan, his successor in the government of the order, who kept it as a precious relic. It was a singular and appropriate circumstance that the funeral obsequies of this great man should be performed by one who had ever during life shown himself his truest and most faithful friend. Cardinal Ugolino Conti came from Venice to Bologna to preside at a ceremony which, in spite of their orphanhood and desolation, his children could scarcely feel a melancholy one. Ugolino claimed this office as his right, and it was he who celebrated the funeral Mass. The people of Bologna, who had shown an extraordinary sympathy for the friars during the last days of Dominic’s illness, and had made continual prayers for their benefactor’s recovery, followed the procession in a dense body. Patriarchs, bishops, and abbots from all the neighboring country swelled the train. Among them was one who had been a dear and familiar friend of the departed Saint—Albert, prior of the convent of St. Catherine in Bologna, a man of great piety and warm affection. As he followed, sorrowful, and bathed in tears,

he observed that the friars chanted the psalms with a certain joyfulness and calm of spirit; and this had such an effect on him, that he too stayed his tears and began to sing with them. And then he began to reflect on the misery of this present state, and the folly of mourning it as an evil when a holy soul was released from bondage and sent to the presence of his God. With this thought in his heart, he went up, in an impulse of devout affection, to the sacred body, and bending over it and conquering his grief, he embraced his dead friend and congratulated him on his blessedness. When he rose, an emotion of wonderful happiness was observable on his countenance. He went up to the prior of St. Nicholas, and taking him by the hand, 'Dear Father, rejoice with me,' he said; 'Master Dominic has even now spoken to me and assured me that before the year is ended we shall both be re-united in Christ.' And the event proved his words, for before the close of the year, Albert was with his friend.

"Nor was this the only revelation of the blessedness of Dominic which was granted to his friends. At the same hour in which he expired, Father Guallo Romanoni, prior of the convent of Friars Preachers in Brescia, fell asleep, leaning against the bell-tower of the church, and he seemed to see two ladders let down from an opening in the sky above him. At the top of one stood our Lord, and His Blessed Mother was at the summit of the other. Angels were going up and down them, and at their foot was seated one in the habit of the Order, but his face was covered with his hood, after the fashion in which the friars are wont to cover the face of the dead when they are carried out for burial. The ladders were drawn up into heaven, and he saw the unknown friar received into the company of the angels, surrounded by a dazzling glory,

and borne to the very feet of Jesus. Guallo awoke, not knowing his great patriarch had breathed his last at the very moment in which it had appeared to him, namely, six in the evening; and he judged it as a certain token that the soul of Dominic had been taken up to heaven. Moreover, on that same day, the 6th of August, Brother Raoul had gone from Rome to Tivoli in company with Tancred, the prior of Santa Sabina, and at the hour of Sext he celebrated Mass and made an earnest momento for his holy founder, whom he knew to be then lying in the extremity of sickness at Bologna. And as he did so, he seemed to see the great road reaching out of that city, and walking along it was the figure of Dominic between two men of venerable aspect, crowned with a golden coronet, and dazzling with light. Nor was this the last of these visions. A student of the University, warmly attached to the Saint, who had been prevented by business from assisting at his funeral, saw him on the following night in a state of surpassing glory, as it seemed to him, seated in a particular spot in the church of St. Nicholas. The vision was so distinct that as he gazed on it, he exclaimed, 'How, Master Dominic, are you still here?' 'Yes,' was the reply, 'I live, indeed, since God has deigned to grant me an eternal life in heaven.' When he went to St. Nicholas on the following morning, he found the place of sepulture was the same indicated in his dream.

"We shall not attempt the task of transcribing the miracles which rendered the place of his rest glorious; they already fill volumes entirely devoted to the purpose of recording them. His brethren of Bologna have been severely blamed by many authors, because, in spite of this accumulation of prodigies and divine favors, they allowed the body to remain under the plain flagstone where it

had been placed by the care of Rudolph of Faenza, without any sign of honor to distinguish it to the eye. And what is more, in spite of the crowds who flocked thither day and night on pilgrimage, and whose gratitude for the graces poured out on them with such abundance was attested by a very forest of waxen images and other similar votive offerings which they hung over the spot, no move was made by the authorities of the Order to obtain the canonization of the saint. This conduct has, as we have said, been censured as a culpable neglect; but we may perhaps be permitted to instance it as an example of that simplicity and modesty which Dominic left behind him as a heritage to his children. The answer of one of the friars, when questioned on the subject, may be taken as a sample of the spirit of the whole body: 'What need for canonization?' he said, 'The holiness of Master Dominic is known to God; it matters little if it be declared publicly by man.' A feeling similar to this has been hereditary in the Order, and has been the cause why the early annals of many of its most illustrious saints are so barren of details. They never thought of providing for the applause of man; and brilliant as is the renown of the Dominican institute in the history of the Church, it may perhaps be said that its greatest works have never been made manifest.

"It was chance, or rather necessity, that at length obliged the religious of St. Nicholas to undertake the first translation of the sacred relics. The convent had to be enlarged on account of the ever-increasing size of the community, and the church stood in need of repair and alteration. The tomb of Dominic had, therefore, to be disturbed, and to do so, the Pope's permission was first required. Honorius III was dead, and his successor in the papal chair was none other than Ugolino Conti, who had been

consecrated Pope under the name of Gregory IX. He acceded to the request with joy, sharply reproving the friars for their long negligence. The solemn translation accordingly took place on the 24th of May, 1233, during the Whitsuntide Chapter of the Order, then assembled at Bologna under Blessed Jordan of Saxony, who had succeeded his great patriarch in the government. The Pope wished to have attended in person at this ceremony, but being prevented from doing so, deputed the Archbishop of Ravenna to represent him, in company with a crowd of other distinguished prelates. Three hundred Friars Preachers, from all countries, were assembled to assist at this function, not without a secret fear lest the sacred remains should be found to have suffered change; and this doubt as to the result of the translation agitated many of them during the day and night preceding that on which it was appointed to take place, with a painful emotion. Among those who showed the greatest disturbance was one named Brother Nicholas of Giovenazzo; but it pleased God to reassure him, and all who shared his timidity, by a special revelation. For, as he prayed, there appeared to him a man of majestic appearance, who spoke these words in a clear and joyous tone: *'Hic accipiet benedictionem a Domino, et misericordiam a Deo salutari suo.'* And he understood them to signify the blessedness enjoyed by St. Dominic, and to be a pledge of the honor which God would cause to be shown to his relics.

"On the 24th of May the ceremony of translation took place. The General, and all the chief Fathers of the General Chapter then assembled at Bologna, together with the bishops, prelates, and magistrates who had come to be present on the occasion, stood round in silence while the grave was opened. Rudolph of Faenza, who

still held the office of procurator, and who had been so dear a son to the great patriarch, was the first to commence raising the stone. Hardly had he begun to remove the mortar and earth that lay beneath, when an extraordinary odor was perceptible, which increased in power and sweetness as they dug deeper, until at length, when the coffin appeared, and was raised to the surface of the grave, the whole church was filled with the perfume, as though from the burning of some precious and costly gums. The bystanders knelt on the pavement, shedding tears of emotion as the lid was raised, when there were once more exposed to their eyes, unchanged, and with the same look of sweetness and majesty they had ever worn in life, the features of their glorious father. Cantipratano, in his second book *De Apibus*, relates a singular circumstance, which has been repeated by Malvenda. He says that among the Fathers present at the ceremony was John of Vicenza, whose singular zeal and sanctity had always rendered him specially dear to St. Dominic. As he stood by the body, he made way to give place to William, Bishop of Modena; but immediately the sacred remains were seen to turn in the direction in which he stood. His humility moved him to change his place again, and the same thing was observed; and it seemed as though, on this the first day when the public honors of the Church were about to be paid to the holy patriarch, he was willing by this token to show that he counted his chiefest glory to be less in such honors than in the sanctity of his children.

“It was Blessed Jordan who raised the body of the beloved father from the coffin, and reverently laid it in a new case. Eight days afterwards, this was once more opened to satisfy the devotion of some nobles and others who

had been present on the previous occasion; then it was that Jordan, taking the sacred head between his hands, kissed it, while tears of tenderness flowed from his eyes; and, so holding it in his arms, he desired all the Fathers of the Chapter to approach and gaze at it for the last time. One after another they came, and kissed the features that still smiled on them like a father; all were conscious of the same extraordinary odor; it remained on the hands and clothes of all who touched or came near the body; nor was this the case merely at the time of the translation. Flaminius, who lived 300 years afterwards, thus writes in 1527: 'This divine odor of which we have spoken, adheres to the relics even to this present day.'

"We shall not pause to give a detail of those abundant miracles which every day shed fresh glory round the sepulchre of St. Dominic. They were scarcely needed, one may say, as attestations of his sanctity; it seemed the universal feeling, both of prelates and people, that his canonization should be no longer deferred. The bull to that effect was published in the July of 1234; and it was the singular happiness of Pope Gregory IX, who had been bound in such close ties of friendship to the founders of the two orders of the Friars Minors and the Friars Preachers, that both should be raised to the altars of the Church by his means, and during his pontificate. His well-known expression with regard to Dominic has been preserved for us by Stefano Salanco: 'I have no more doubt of the sanctity of this man, than I have of that of St. Peter or St. Paul.' " 151

CHAPTER 15

Epilogue

DOMINIC was a spendthrift. As a student, he recklessly sold valuable books that he might give the money to the poor. Then he just as irrevocably gave his heart away, to the Divine Beggar who will not take less than all. The wealth that was his by birth, the strong ardor of his Latin temperament, these he gave to God as soon as he was aware of them; his feet that loved freedom, he fettered to the *Via Crucis*. When his listening heart heard the far high trumpeting of truth, he gave his life to the apostolate. Then, what was there left to give? Figuratively turning his pockets inside out, he found he had nothing left but the very blood in his veins. Immortal spendthrift, he threw that too, into the cause, and in five short years he had spent it all. They counted his years and found them 51. Dominic would be living yet, his strong voice sweeping continents he never heard of, if he had been left to live until his love had burned to a quiet, satisfied flame. No life is long enough for one who longs to conquer the world. Tartary? Africa? One man cannot go to all the places Dominic longed to evangelize, if he were to live a hundred lifetimes. So God, with a wise economy, gave him five years to set the world on fire and to train the spiritual sons whose blood would redden unknown shores and kindle the torch in lands their father would never see. Has anyone ever spent so much of life in so short a time?

At the time of the last translation of the relics of St. Dominic in 1946, an attempt was made to reconstruct,

by means of careful measurements, the features of this remarkable man and saint. Seven centuries are bound to efface most of the details one would wish to have preserved. Yet the result of the expert and painstaking work is a portrait more sincere (and more believable) than most of the paintings that, through the intervening centuries, have tried to represent him. This portrait corroborates, though it does not add much to the description of our holy Father dictated in old age by Sister Cecilia. Though often in retrospect one's youthful heroes fade and lose stature, hers did not, and through her loving words he peers at us out of the shadow of the years, eternally young and inspiring. And once again, viewing the latest portrait and reviewing her words, we wonder why it is that St. Dominic is so little known.

In modern parlance, we can safely say that St. Dominic was not photogenic. His friend and contemporary, St. Francis, definitely was. Francis shines out of every line of the *Fioretti*, he frolics through art and literature with ease, making friends wherever he goes. Dominic the man is harder to see, perhaps for the reason that so many of his early companions were brilliant personalities and he made the most of their individuality instead of centering attention on himself—a thing which Francis could hardly have done, since so much of the Franciscan ideal depended on his own personality. Furthermore, Dominic and his followers were devoted to the study of theology, and the queen of studies demands of her followers that the light of the intellect and the eyes of the soul be turned Godwards, away from self. Dominic pointed attention away from himself to such an extent that now it is very hard to see him; he is like a man holding up a light in a very dark place, calling us to look at something else. We

see of him only the highlighted features; the sharply outlined cheekbones, the deep-set eyes, a flash of white where his habit reflects the light—and the rest is darkness. The painting by Titian catches this effect of a personality amid shadows—but Titian has made the mistake of making Dominic old. Not by any stretch of the imagination can we imagine him to be old and tired; he died young, full of the plans and the enthusiasms that only youth understands. And today, after seven centuries have erased nearly all the traces of his earthly life, youth still responds with a desperate enthusiasm to the charm of his ideal.

We know it is proper that it is his ideal, rather than his personality, that survives, but we cannot help regretting that we know so little of this man, this medieval firebrand after whom the sons of every great house in Europe flocked in eager pursuit. If a young priest of today were to preach on a great university campus—say Columbia or the University of Pennsylvania or Georgetown or the University of California—and get such a following that not only dozens of students but also professors—the head of the law faculty in one college, the dean of theology in another—would eagerly throw over worldly careers and go with him to evangelize Russia and Tibet, we would be astounded. He could not promise them anything but privation and death; remember—poverty and martyrdom; he has not even a presentable house of novitiate, nor a comfortable place to train his students, nor any money, yet a bishop resigns his diocese in Ohio, to put on that beautiful habit. The President's son, the sons of the Governors of New York and Illinois, the heir to the Du Pont fortunes, a popular opera singer and three mid-western bishops, are knocking at the doors of his new and untried Order. Mothers wail and fathers threaten—and

young men who yesterday hadn't a thought of religious life, today are praying madly to be allowed to go with him. Go where? To poverty, austerity, and death. If this happened, here and now, we would examine very closely the personality of the human magnet who drew the flower of our land to a type of life that looks so unrewarding to the rest of us. Yet the young priest who did just this, and more, in his world of great universities and powerful peoples, is all but forgotten.

This was the man, remember, of whom it was said: "None did ever resist the charm of his conversation, or went away from him without feeling himself better." This was the compassionate young student (and doubtless students of 1190 were as heedless of others as students traditionally are) who sold his only valuables to help the war refugees that crowded Palencia and haunted his dreams like the children crying in the dreams of Patrick. This was the missionary whose heart was bigger than the known world, who built to house kingdoms yet unborn. No wonder that five years after his death there were 90 convents of his Order! We in this century have rejoiced to see the rise of Maryknoll, which in forty years has sent several thousand missionaries into the field afar; yet twenty years after Dominic's death there were 30,000 of his followers advancing upon the world's areas of darkness, and the first century of the Order's existence saw no less than 13,000 martyrs! That is to say that twenty years after his death there were exactly *twice* as many Dominicans in Europe as there are in America today, and that the total of martyrs for that crimson century could be matched only by the martyrdom of nearly every Dominican priest and sister in the United States as of today.

How could the man who brought about this tremendous thing have been allowed to slip into oblivion?

One of the few things that people do remember about St. Dominic is his connection with the Rosary. Just what that connection was, it is difficult to prove after this lapse of time, but he is commonly credited with having organized the Rosary, the "Psalter of the layfolk," into a form uniting both vocal and mental prayer. There are, of course, those erudite individuals who claim that St. Dominic had nothing to do with the Rosary, and insist that they can prove their case by the so-called "argument of silence"; the fact that nothing authentic is found in print about the devotion until nearly two centuries after the Saint's death and that the first mention is that of Alan de la Roche who, depending upon one's opinion of Alan, was either (1) the holy man who invented the Rosary, (2) a lying scoundrel who made up a number of fables about St. Dominic in order to bolster the sagging morale of the Order, or (3) a preacher with a colorful imagination who felt that his hearers would know he was writing sermon *exempla*, and not facts.

As a matter of fact, the century in which Alan lived saw no less than 23 Dominicans who would later be either canonized or beatified. The Order may not have been at its highest peak, but neither was its morale in any danger. Alan himself may never be canonized, though as recently as 1935 his name was still on the list of active causes (which is more than can be said of most of his enemies), but he did one great work for which the Order remembers him: he founded the Rosary Confraternity. Perhaps it is this which confuses him in the minds of many with St. Dominic himself.

The lack of documents bearing on the beginnings of the Rosary is annoying, but not—at least in the Dominican Order—at all decisive. Anyone who has spent any time at all in Dominican archives will probably agree that no other institution on earth has been so exasperatingly casual about documents. Papal bulls were carried about lovingly until they fell to pieces or were lost. Some of the most valuable papers bearing upon the founding of the Order and its privileges were burned or lost. It is questionable whether there would have been any necessity for documents in the thirteenth century for the establishment of a devotion so spontaneous in character, in fact, as the Rosary; the only occasion that would be apt to call forth papal pronouncements would be one in which the devotion deviated from Catholic teaching—and there is no evidence, anywhere, that such a thing happened. Such documents would surely have come down to us through the papal archives.

We of a documentary age find it hard to understand this, but it is a hard fact that our ancestors had little reverence for written records; perhaps they were too often witnesses of invading armies and burning monasteries. The books of St. Albert the Great, the most renowned teacher in Europe, had to be gathered up painstakingly after his death from the places where he had spent a night, or a fortnight, on his endless travels. Only recently one of his manuscripts turned up—in the Protestant Cathedral of St. Paul in London, of all the unlikely places—indicating that there may still be valuable manuscripts floating around in odd corners of the world. St. Thomas wrote casually on anything that came to hand and left his priceless writings tucked away in corners where the mice would get them if some zealous brother didn't.

There is at least one instance of a Dominican Blessed—Augustine of Nocera—who was canonized and venerated as a saint for a century or so—and then in the reign of a later Pope relegated once more to the ranks of the *beati* because somebody seems to have mislaid the pertinent papers. Since so few things were written down at all, and those that were written were so quickly lost or mislaid, the simple fact that we have no records does not make a strong case against St. Dominic's preaching of the Rosary. No one filed and tabulated and recorded things in those days. St. Dominic carried a book with him and it wasn't a diary. He felt—and the whole of thirteenth century spirituality is mirrored in this—that the Gospel was of far greater importance in the words of St. Matthew than in his own personal interpretation. He didn't belong to an age of self-conscious introspection and literary self-analysis.

The descriptive adjective "Christlike" is applied in a general way to all priests, and in particular to many saints who show to the world His spirit and actions. In the case of St. Dominic it meant something more, for by an odd coincidence he is said to have had the same coloring and general physical characteristics of His Master. Our Blessed Lord, according to the constant tradition of the early Church, had a fresh ruddy complexion and hair of the auburn hue that we commonly call "titian"; Sister Cecilia—who must have known what she was talking about—ascribes the same to St. Dominic. Both had the same dark eyes, described as lustrous and magnetic; the same slender fine-boned hands. Though St. Dominic was of medium height and our Lord is presumed (by the research of the Holy Shroud as well as by tradition) to have been somewhat taller, the likeness is well worth noting. The dark and dour-faced spectres painted by some

misguided artists as St. Dominic are a great injustice against an amiable and a kindly man who was dearly loved by his contemporaries and feared only by those who always fear the truth.

A true son of the medieval Church, St. Dominic would naturally have a deep devotion to our Blessed Lady. Every page of the *Vitae Fratrum* indicates that he had far more than the usual devotion; that he and his children were in a special way the children of the Queen of heaven. Learned historians of other faiths, or of no faith, delight in making sly comments on the medieval "worship of the Virgin" which is supposed to have held the world back from progress for so many centuries. Scathing references are made to "stupid and immoral monks . . . protected by the Virgin with no regard for divine justice." People who prefer that jaundiced view of the Middle Ages can never see with clear vision the pervading spirit of the presence of God that made those years the most productive of beauty in all history. (Can we today produce a Chartres, a Cologne Cathedral, or a Notre Dame of Paris? A Fra Angelico, a Dante, or a Donatello?) St. Dominic breathed always the air of faith, though he preached among people who preferred error; our Lady strolled in and out of his cloisters with the easy familiarity of a Mother and the authority of a Queen. She blessed the brethren as they slept, and scolded the transgressors of her Son's laws; she came to give advice on new ventures, to help an artist choose his colors, to suggest a sermon to a preacher, to dry a novice's tears. She designed their habit, gave them the Rosary, pointed out the place where the first permanent foundation should be made. After St. Dominic's death, she continues to guide his successor; she blessed the brethren at the *Salve* procession, and promised Blessed

Jordan that she would watch over the Order forever—that no member would remain long in mortal sin, for either she would win them to repentance or they would leave the Order.¹⁵² If these things happened today, the whole world would be madly in pilgrimage and every newspaper would be full of it; but neither St. Dominic nor his early followers seemed to be greatly astonished by it. After all, she was their Mother, wasn't she?

St. Dominic must have dearly loved his own mother, for he was a man of deep and tender affections. His father was a fighting man, and proudly carried a sword against the Moors. This was to leave a stamp upon his son's Order and help to establish the friars as warriors in the Church. Yet it was St. Dominic's mother (beatified as Blessed Jane of Aza) whose hand is most evident in the Order of truth. With a woman's instinct for using every other means before descending to force, she must have trained her sons in the belief that ideas are more powerful than many weapons. It is due to her, first of all, that her third son was not to follow her husband's wish and become a knight; to her also we are indebted, probably, for the devotional pattern of the Order. (Where would be a better place for her son to learn the value of combining vocal and mental prayer than at her side, for mothers are always ingenious, and what would be easier than to snare a child's wandering attention during prayers by telling him the little stories of the life of Christ that we know as the mysteries? This, of course, is pure conjecture, but it is worth considering. More, it must have been from her—since he had few other contacts with women in his youth—that St. Dominic learned the power of the hand that rocks the cradle. This force that other founders had ignored, he considered and used.

It was Chaucer who described women, probably not without provocation, as "that most conspicuous mischief of the human race." From the time of St. Paul, who seems to have had his troubles with Syntiche and Evodia and the other pious women who insisted on sharing his apostolate, the devout female sex has always been a conundrum (and at times an embarrassment) to the apostle. Our Lord Himself was always graciously kind to women, whether they deserved it or not. Those who took up the cross and followed Him were not always successful in handling this delicate problem.

Up to the time of St. Dominic, women who wished to become religious or who were destined by their families to this vocation were established in some cloister where they prayed quietly for a lifetime. Scholastica and Hroswitha and several other nuns who attained prominence in letters or affairs of state were definitely exceptions to the rule; Teresa of Avila, Catherine of Siena and Brigid of Sweden belonged to a later day. The ordinary path of women of the thirteenth century was hidden.

St. Dominic, who was an innovator in so many other ways, found a place in his great scheme for these potential dynamos. Perhaps he got the idea from the heretics—Dominic, like his most famous son, was not averse to using a good idea no matter where he found it. These itchy-eared apostles of error had mobilized their women into an invincible army, and Languedoc was dotted with strongholds of heresy held by women. No one, apparently, had thought of baptizing the technique and utilizing it to spread the truth. It is quite likely that St. Dominic had thought this problem through long before the nine women presented themselves to him at Fanjeaux to ask for direction and protection. They got what they asked for, and

more, they got a job to do. Not only were they to live a life of prayer and sacrifice like other cloistered women; they had definite work to do, work that the members of the First Order could not do. They were the complement which, with the Friars Preachers and the Third Order Militia, finished the circle and made the Order universal.

Besides the universality of time and of works, there is a further stamp of Dominic's character on the Order he founded. It is in a sense the transmitting of his talents and characteristics to his children. In any large family you see the same thing happening; one child has his father's eyes, another his mechanical genius, another his musical ability, and so on for all the personality traits and skills. One might almost say that St. Dominic lived such a brief time on earth that there was not time for the world to see all of his talents. So these were distributed to his descendents and we see in one his spirit of prayer, in another his love of poverty; one practices penance as he did, another shares his gift of preaching. One has the same gift of counsel for doubtful souls, another possesses some of his genius for organization. In seven centuries no one has managed to exhaust the possibilities of sanctity in this great man who lived so short a time on earth, and none has been a mightier man than his father. It is a closer glimpse of this hidden Saint to see in his children the personal traits that were his, the features of his sanctity, one might say.

Dominic the man never reached Tartary, the goal of his apostolic longings. Within ten years after his death his sons were threading the dangerous passes of the Carpathians, seeking out Mongol chieftains who killed them as fast as they came. Dominic went to Tartary with the young Polish friars who died in the holocaust at Sandomir

under the swords of the Golden Horde in 1260. Fifty years later he went in the venturesome spirit of Jordan of Catalá, who walked and sailed from Portugal to Coulam, which he thought was China, but which turned out to be India instead, and who wrote home the chatty and cheerful letters that mark his journey of 1326 as one of the earliest tourist jaunts in the Orient. For more than 300 years, beginning with Sebastian de Canto and Jerome of the Cross in 1566, Dominic schemed and toiled to get into Tartary; again and again his blood was shed in the effort to Christianize a nation that had demonstrated time after time that it did not want Christianity. In the martyred bishops and priests and laymen who in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries chained a Rosary of blood across the Orient, his courage lived again; his unquenchable enthusiasm and his love for souls shone out of the letters of his namesake, Dominic of Eriquicia, who wrote home to his superior in 1633: "Whatever you do, don't abandon these people! When we die, send more men. Perhaps today, perhaps tomorrow, we will die as the others have died; but *send more priests!*" And Dominic, today, is still in Tartary, undermining the horrors of Red rule with the same weapons that have secured so many martyrs for the Church: the Mass and the Rosary.

Dominic had never heard of America, of course, though perhaps he had heard the tales of the wandering Irishmen who had stumbled over it in looking for the land of eternal youth, or heard some of the Norse or Italian references to a great continent they thought might be either Iceland or a part of the land of promise. Yet Dominic's hand was evident in the battle for human dignity that was fought in a mud hut on Santo Domingo by three of his stiff-necked sons who risked death rather

than back down on their principles. How much of our American notion of democracy do we owe to this man of the Middle Ages who founded the world's first democracy? Future scholars may give us the whole story of those courageous men who fought for justice in the far-flung colonies. Dominic himself had crossed and re-crossed southern Europe in his busy lifetime; his sons, struck with the same holy wanderlust, sailed with every fleet to every known port. One runs across enchanting legends about the eight friars who set out from Rome to go to Cathay, by way of Ethiopia, their geography not being too accurate. Sailors back from North Atlantic voyages in the early fifteenth century reported Dominicans on Greenland, that icy rock which an enterprising Norseman had named optimistically to attract settlers; they heated their convent with floor heat, piped from the nearby volcanoes. Iceland, more hospitable to man than Greenland, gave them a base of operations for several centuries, and even today the truncated Lutheran liturgy of that land is Dominican in origin. From every corner of the world, from lands where boa-constrictors dangled from the jungle trees to cold little colonies that paid their Peter's Pence in walrus teeth, the ubiquitous Dominicans were spread within 200 years of Dominic's death. They wrote dictionaries in native languages, dealt with pagan rituals, suffered and died on lonely shores miles from any countryman. The sea-faring strain was strong in Dominic's children.

On the day that he sent his most talented delegation to Paris at the dispersal, Dominic laid the first foundation-stone of the Scholastic edifice that was to produce St. Albert the Great, St. Thomas Aquinas, and the long line of lesser luminaries which have brightened the world since their day. A scholar and a man of heavenly learning,

he was himself to spend his short life in apostolic preaching, far from the shelter of the schools, but he laid the foundations for the professional skill in the queen of sciences which flowered so soon after his death in the work of St. Thomas. Dominic chose the university towns by preference, and worked among the teachers and students, knowing them to be a formative element in the thought of the time. In his lifelong battle against error, he saw both sides of the coin; to counteract lies, one must know the truth. So strongly was this zeal for training in theology to remain among his sons that even during the troubled seventeenth century, when England, Ireland, and all the missions of the Orient were daily giving martyrs to the Church, the Dominicans never slacked in their training for the men who went to those dangerous missions. A Dominican might be picked up at the dock in London or pulled off a junk in the harbor of Kagoshima and martyred before he could strike one blow on the missions; yet his training was just as thorough as though he would spend his life teaching at the University of Salamanca. This dogged devotion to truth which cost so many lives was a direct inheritance from a father to whom truth was the most beautiful thing on earth. The centuries have proved that Dominic was right and that the truth shall prevail. One of Cromwell's minions wrote plaintively to his chief that "ye Dominicans are extremely hard to kill." In spite of murderous efforts on the part of tyrants from Ezzelino to Stalin, the Dominicans keep springing up again, like dandelions in the lawn. What a powerful incentive force must have been the personality of that man of long ago, who passed on this divine stubbornness to his children!

Of all his sons, none bore the imprint of the master

more clearly than Jordan of Saxony, who succeeded him in office and whose genius it was to finish so many of the things that St. Dominic's brief life had left incomplete. As far as we know, Jordan saw the Saint only twice; the first time, when he went to confession to him in Paris while still a teacher at the University and had not made up his mind about the Dominicans. Dominic, who so well understood souls, did not push the young man; he suggested to him that he go on for the priesthood. The second time Jordan saw him was at the first General Chapter, where Jordan, who had worn the habit only three months, was a delegate. Jordan was a Saxon and a university professor; Dominic was a Spaniard and a wandering preacher. Yet between these men of dissimilar backgrounds there was formed with incredible sureness a bond of friendship that was to fuse their labors for the Order so that it might almost have been one person who guided its fortunes for the first twenty years. Jordan was elected to replace the Saint in 1222, and until his death—by drowning, en route from Jerusalem—sixteen years later, he carried on without a break the tremendous project that Dominic had laid out for him. Stepping into the shoes of a Saint can never be easy, and trying to do all the things St. Dominic did must have been harrowing indeed, for he had an iron constitution and a consuming flame of zeal that granted himself no rest at all. Yet Jordan did this, and shaped the various works of the Order as the Saint himself would probably have done. He was the first, and one of the greatest, of the men inspired by the Saint to superhuman efforts in the apostolate.

St. Dominic, seated on the mountain of the *Signadou*, seeing the harvest fields of the world spread out before him, and Patrick on the Hill of Eagles, wresting from God

the heritage of the Irish, are strikingly alike. It is in the intensity and power of their prayer that the similarity is most seen. These lines of Sir Aubrey de Vere were written about St. Patrick, but here, too, is St. Dominic:

“ . . . As others gaze on earth,
Her vales, her plains, her green mead ocean-girt,
So gazed the Saint forever upon God
That girds all worlds—saw intermediate naught—
And on Him watched the sunshine and the storm
And learned His countenance, and from it alone
Drew in upon his heart his day and night.
That contemplation was for him no dream;
It hurried him on his mission. As a sword
He lodged his soul within the hand divine
And wrought, keen-edged, God’s counsel. Next to God,
Next and how near, he loved the souls of men.”

One of the early chroniclers repeats this thought in saying of “Brother Dominic, who died holily in Bologna,” that “it was necessary that he who loved God so much should love men dearly.”

Like children visiting a museum, looking at the heavy suits of armor and the cumbersome weapons of crusading times, we wonder at the strength of the mighty ones of old. Well, it is not surprising that we cannot measure up to the footsteps of our Father, or do the things that he did. We are, after all, not called to the mission that was his: to found an Order. Many of his children, our brothers and sisters, are recognized by the Church as saints. Some of them are better known outside the family than he is. Yet none had his peculiar genius, and none was his equal. Star differs from star in glory, and his is unique. He was a giant in the Church, an athlete of Christ capable of doing

tremendous things. Even among religious founders—a talented, saintly, and capable group of people—it is doubtful if anyone has ever accomplished so much in so short a time. We cannot measure up to the impossibly high mark that he has set, but let us be the proudest people on earth that he *has* set it so high!

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Notes

CHAPTER I

¹ *Cartulaire*, chap. 1.

² Jordan, 5; Ferrandus, 3.

³ Jordan, 5.

⁴ Jordan, 5.

⁵ *Acta*, 35, Testimony of Brother Stephen.

⁶ Theodoric, Book I, chap. 5.

⁷ *Acta*, 6, Testimony of Brother Ventura.

CHAPTER II

⁸ Jordan, 12.

⁹ Jordan, 15.

¹⁰ Castillo, chap. 7.

¹¹ Jordan, 17.

¹² Lacordaire, p. 223.

¹³ Jordan, 18.

¹⁴ Jordan, 20.

¹⁵ Lacordaire, p. 241.

CHAPTER III

¹⁶ Jordan, 24.

¹⁷ Castillo, chap. 8.

¹⁸ The account of the *Signadou* seems to rest on an ancient tradition, but no mention of it is found in the primitive lives. The first reference to it in writing which has been discovered dates from 1423, when Jean Sesale, the Curé of Fanjeaux, in his testament, bequeathed a house "at the place called the *Signadou*." A great cross and chapel were erected there in 1538 and processions went there each Friday from the feast of the Finding of the Holy Cross to the feast of the Exaltation. This cross bore an inscription giving a brief account of the apparition. The old chapel and cross were destroyed,

probably at the time of the French Revolution, and a new cross of white marble was erected on the spot in 1860. This cross still marks the place of the apparition at the present time. (cf. *Cartulaire*, Vol.

I, p. 133, note 1.)

¹⁹ Ferrandus, 22.

²⁰ Humbert, 19.

²¹ Jarrett, chap. 3.

²² Mandonnet, p. 373.

²³ Jordan, 28.

²⁴ Humbert, 21.

CHAPTER IV

²⁵ Mandonnet, p. 26.

²⁶ Lacordaire, chap. 6. Because of a general misunderstanding on this question, I include here the notes on the Inquisition, taken from Chapter VI of Lacordaire, page 151 and following: "In 1184, Pope Lucius III, driven from Rome by the repeated insults of the Romans, was living at Verona. The Emperor Frederick I repaired to the town, accompanied by numerous bishops and lords. They held there a grand council, on which Fleury comments as follows in his *Ecclesiastical History*: 'I think I can discover here the origin of the Inquisition against heretics, in the fact that the bishops were ordered to make inquiries, personally or by commissaries, touching persons suspected of heresy, upon common hearsay or private information, while the various degrees of *SUSPECTED*, *CONVICTED*, *PENITENT* and *RELAPSED* are specified, and the punishment graduated accordingly; and finally, in the regulation that after the Church shall have applied her spiritual penalties to the accused, she shall hand them over to the secular power.'

"In 1198 appear the first Inquisitorial Commissaries of whom history takes notice. They were two monks of the Order of Citeaux, Ranier and Guy by name.

"The three legates of the Order of Citeaux whom St. Dominic and the Bishop of Osma met at Montpellier towards the end of 1205 were also Inquisitorial Commissaries.

"In 1215 (Dominic) was present at the General Council of the Lateran, where a fine occasion offered itself to promote the interests of the Inquisition if he wished to do so. They remained precisely as they

had been. In 1216, his Order is confirmed by two bulls of Honorius III, and in neither of these instruments is allusion made to any service of his as inquisitor. During the five remaining years of his life he received diplomas and briefs from the Holy See, in none of which is he spoken of as inquisitor.

"On April 8, 1236, Pope Gregory IX entrusted to the Dominicans the office of the Inquisition. (This from *Vitae Fratrum*.) In 1254 the Roman office of the Inquisition was given, not to the Preachers but to the Franciscans.

"In 1246 the Council of Beziers drew up the rules of the Inquisition.

"In 1255 King St. Louis of France begged Pope Alexander IV to formally establish the Inquisition in France.

"In 1419 King Alfonso of Aragon asked for the Inquisition to be extended to Valencia.

"In 1476 the Dominicans were withdrawn from the office of Inquisitors in Spain, and the work was entrusted to the secular clergy.

"By the end of the fifteenth century King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella had introduced the Inquisition into Castile and León, and in 1521 King John of Portugal asked for it to be established in his kingdom.

"In 1542 the Roman Congregation of the Holy Office was set up, and inquisitorial powers previously granted were revoked.

"By order of Philip II, the first *auto-da-fe* took place in Seville in 1559."

From these facts and others available to them, the members of the Spanish Cortes assembled in 1812 drew the following conclusions: "The Inquisition was an institution demanded and established by the Kings of Spain, under difficult and extraordinary circumstances.

"The early inquisitors encountered heresy with no other arms than those of prayer, patience, and instruction. And this remark applies more particularly to Saint Dominic, as we are assured by the Bollandists, with Fathers Echard and Touron.

"Philip II, that most absurd of princes, was the real founder of the Inquisition, and his jealous policy brought it to the pitch of power it attained."

Having admitted all this, a Protestant historian concludes glumly: "Be that as it may, there can be no doubt that St. Dominic was a cruel and sanguinary man!"

²⁷ Laurent, 54.

²⁸ Jordan, 34.

²⁹ Jordan, 20.

³⁰ *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 2, chap. 3.

³¹ *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 2, chap. 4.

³² Constantine, 43.

³³ *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 2, chap. 13.

³⁴ Stephen of Salignac, Book 1, chap. 9.

CHAPTER V

³⁵ Jordan, 38; Laurent, 60.

³⁶ Mandonnet, p. 65.

³⁷ Humbert, *De Vita Regulari*, Book 2, chap. 41.

³⁸ Humbert, 40.

³⁹ Laurent, 60.

⁴⁰ Mandonnet, p. 136

⁴¹ So Mother Drane, p. 59. There is no record extant, however, of Innocent III ever using this form of address in his official documents. The title "Master of the Preachers" first appears in a donation of the Cathedral Chapter of Toulouse of July, 1216 (Laurent, 70) and the first papal document in which we find the term "Order of Preachers" used is a letter of Honorius III dated February 11, 1218 (Laurent, 84). However, it is an interesting legend, and has an authentic medieval touch.

⁴² *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 1, chap. 1.

⁴³ Humbert, *De Vita Regulari*, Book 1, chap. 51.

⁴⁴ Mandonnet, p. 72.

⁴⁵ *Constitutions*, dist. 1, chap. 4.

⁴⁶ Mandonnet, p. 320, note 71.

⁴⁷ Mandonnet, p. 431, note 20.

⁴⁸ Mandonnet, p. 319, note 67.

CHAPTER VI

⁴⁹ Laurent, 75.

⁵⁰ Laurent, 77.

⁵¹ This tradition, which is first noted by Galvanus de la Flamma

(cf. the text of his *Cronica*, edited by G. Odetto in A.F.O.P., X, 1940, p. 346) is accepted by all the older Dominican writers: Fontana, Malvenda, Mamachi, Masetti, etc. More recently it has been questioned by Fathers Denifle and Altaner, and defended by Taurisano and Zucchi. (cf. Raymond Creytens, "Le 'Studium Romanae Curiae' et le Maître du Sacré Palais" in A.F.O.P., XII, 1942, pp. 5-83, who, however, rejects the tradition.)

⁵² Constantine, 25.

⁵³ *Acta*, 12, Testimony of William of Montferrat.

⁵⁴ Jordan, 47; Ferrandus, 31. There are indications that some of the brethren made profession at an earlier date. John of Spain, testifying at the canonization of St. Dominic in 1233, states that it will be "eighteen years come the Feast of St. Augustine next" since he received the habit from St. Dominic and made profession to him. (*Acta*, 25). This would make the date August 28, 1216 (cf. Mandonnet, p. 428, note 16).

⁵⁵ Mandonnet, p. 428; Jarrett, p. 75.

⁵⁶ Constantine, 26; Ferrandus, 31.

⁵⁷ *Vitate Fratrum*, Book 1, chap. 5.

⁵⁸ Jarrett, p. 30.

⁵⁹ *Acta*, 21, Testimony of Bonviso.

⁶⁰ *Acta*, 21, Testimony of Bonviso.

⁶¹ *Acta*, 41, Testimony of Paul of Venice.

⁶² *Acta*, 41, Testimony of Paul of Venice.

⁶³ *Vitate Fratrum*, Book 2, chap. 25.

⁶⁴ *Acta*, 41, Testimony of Paul of Venice.

⁶⁵ Narrative of Sister Cecilia, Drane, p. 127.

⁶⁶ *Vitate Fratrum*, Book 2, chap. 24.

⁶⁷ Jordan, 105.

⁶⁸ *Acta*, 32, Testimony of Rudolph of Faenza.

⁶⁹ *Acta*, 25, Testimony of John of Spain.

⁷⁰ *Acta*, 43, Testimony of Paul of Venice.

⁷¹ Jordan, 103.

CHAPTER VII

⁷² Constantine, 36; Theodoric, Book 2, chap. 7.

⁷³ Theodoric, Book 2, chap. 8.

⁷⁴ Theodoric, Book 2, chap. 5.

⁷⁵ Drane, p. 104, from Polidori.

- ⁷⁶ Theodoric, Book 2, chap. 10.
- ⁷⁷ Narrative of Sister Cecilia, Drane, p. 107.
- ⁷⁸ Theodoric, Book 2, chap. 5.
- ⁷⁹ Theodoric, Book 2, chap. 5.
- ⁸⁰ Theodoric, Book 2, chap. 5.
- ⁸¹ Drane, p. 97.
- ⁸² Humbert, 44.
- ⁸³ Narrative of Sister Cecilia, Drane, p. 99.
- ⁸⁴ Theodoric, Book 2, chap. 12.
- ⁸⁵ Theodoric, Book 2, chap. 15.

CHAPTER VIII

- ⁸⁶ Theodoric, Book 2, chap. 4.
- ⁸⁷ Guiraud, pp. 107-108.
- ⁸⁸ *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 4, chap. 13.
- ⁸⁹ Mandonnet, p. 48, note 54.
- ⁹⁰ *Vitate Fratrum*, Book 1, chap. 4.
- ⁹¹ *Acta*, 31, Testimony of Rudolph of Faenza.

CHAPTER IX

- ⁹² Theodoric, Book 3.
- ⁹³ Humbert, 25.
- ⁹⁴ The claim has been made that St. Dominic as a Canon of Osma wore a black soutane and a white rochet. (Cf. Michael Pio, page 13, and *Histoire des Ordres Monastiques, Religieux et Militaires*, chap. 3, p. 205.) Echard (*Scriptores*, Vol. I, p. 71) rejects this claim, insisting that the original habit worn by St. Dominic as a Canon Regular was a white tunic with a black cappa. He cites the testimony of Bernard Gui (*Vita*, Cap. 34) who in his account of the vision of our Lady to Blessed Reginald, states that St. Dominic and his followers then set aside the surplice, assuming the white scapular, but retaining the cappa over the white tunic which they previously wore as Canons Regular. It might be remarked that Echard actually rejects the idea that any change took place in the habit as a result of the vision to Blessed Reginald, and insists that St. Dominic was already wearing the scapular. He would make the vision of the Blessed Virgin involve simply "showing to Blessed Reginald the habit of the Order," following the testimony of Blessed Jordan.

- ⁹⁵ From the ceremonial of investiture.

- 96 *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 4, chap. 6.
- 97 *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 4, chap. 9.
- 98 *Acta*, 36.
- 99 Jordan, 66.
- 100 Jordan, 66.

CHAPTER X

- 101 Castillo, 40.
- 102 Castillo, 40.
- 103 Castillo, 40.
- 104 Galvanus de la Flamma, 10.
- 105 Ferrandus, 40.
- 106 *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 2, chap. 6.
- 107 *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 2, chap. 9.
- 108 *Acta*, Supplement, 17.
- 109 Ferrandus, 40.
- 110 *Histoire des Ordres Monastiques*, etc., p. 257.
- 111 Narrative of Sister Cecilia, Drane, p. 174.
- 112 Theodoric, Book 3, chap. 8.

CHAPTER XI

- 113 *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 2, chap. 5.
- 114 *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 4, chap. 10.
- 115 Jordan, 101.
- 116 Jordan, 3.
- 117 Touron, Book 2, p. 11.
- 118 *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 2, chap. 12.
- 119 *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 2, chap. 8.
- 120 Theodoric, Book 4, chap. 5.
- 121 Theodoric, Book 4, chap. 1.

CHAPTER XII

- 122 *Histoire des Ordres Monastiques*, etc., p. 246.
- 123 Guiraud, p. 166.
- 124 Guiraud, p. 143.
- 125 The following account is from an article entitled "Dominican Sisters in the United States," by Rev. A. L. McMahon, O.P., in the *Dominican Yearbook for 1907* (Dominican Fathers of St. Joseph's Province). He does not indicate his sources, but this is the legend

as it appears in various places in history: "At this period, while St. Dominic was struggling with spiritual arms against the heretics of southern France, he conceived the idea of establishing an order of men who, making use of material weapons, should protect the faithful and defend the goods of the Church. As time went on, he found that in other countries also the Church was the victim of the cruelty and rapacity of its enemies, and the idea grew into a strong desire and a fixed purpose. Finally, in 1218, an appeal from the bishops of Poland for protection against the idolatrous people of the North having been received at Rome, while St. Dominic was there, he made known his design to Pope Honorius III, who blessed it and bade him carry it out with his accustomed zeal. To his call men quickly responded. Clothing those who were of exemplary life with white tunics and black mantles to which were fastened black and white crosses, he gave them a rule obliging them to bear arms in defense of the Church and to recite daily a certain number of *Our Fathers* and *Hail Marys*. The organization thus brought into being he called "The Militia of Jesus Christ," a name that it bore until the end for which it had been created having ceased to exist, and a charitable and penitential character was substituted for the military."

¹²⁶ C. M. Antony, p. 183. This is evidently a private communication from Father Mandonnet.

¹²⁷ Jarrett, *Religious Life*, p. 103.

¹²⁸ *Année Dominicaine*, Margaret, Vol. VII; Genevieve, Vol. XII; Zedislava, Vol. I; Constance, Vol. VI; Emily, Vol. VIII.

¹²⁹ Constantine, 46.

CHAPTER XIII

¹³⁰ Mandonnet, p. 90.

¹³¹ Humbert, *De Vita Regulari*, I, 5.

¹³² Humbert, *De Vita Regulari*, II, 46. The Chapter of 1236 incorporated into the prologue of the Constitutions this principle of St. Dominic, that the rule does not bind under pain of sin, only under penalty (cf. *Acta Capitulorum Generalium*, ed. Reichert, Rome 1898: I, 8). It is now a feature of nearly all religious rules.

¹³³ *Acta*, 43, Testimony of Paul of Venice.

¹³⁴ Guiraud, p. 153.

¹³⁵ Guiraud, p. 162.

¹³⁶ Theodoric, Book 3, chap. 20.

¹³⁷ Theodoric, Book 4, chap. 13. Peter Ferrandus (43) tells the story of another Conrad, himself this time a Cistercian and a bishop who, while a guest of the brethren in Bologna, had doubts as to what he should think of the Order. He asked for a Missal, opened it at random, and his eyes fell upon the words of the preface of the Blessed Virgin, *LAUDARE, BENEDICERE, PRAEDICARE*. He immediately set aside his scruple and indicated that though he wore the habit of another order, he considered himself as henceforth belonging totally to the Preachers.

¹³⁸ Michael Pio, 36.

¹³⁹ *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 2, chap. 21.

¹⁴⁰ *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 2, chap. 11.

¹⁴¹ *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 2, chap. 26.

¹⁴² *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 4, chap. 21.

¹⁴³ Narrative of Sister Cecilia, Drane, p. 136.

CHAPTER XIV

¹⁴⁴ *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 4, chap. 14.

¹⁴⁵ Touron, Book 3, chap. 8.

¹⁴⁶ Mandonnet, p. 323.

¹⁴⁷ *Summa theol.*, IIa, IIae, q. 188.

¹⁴⁸ Theodoric, Book 4, chap. 24.

¹⁴⁹ Theodoric, Book 5, chap. 2.


¹⁵⁰ *Acta*, 8, Testimony of Ventura.

¹⁵¹ The account of the death of St. Dominic is word for word from Mother Drane, who compiled it from the testimony of the various witnesses related in the *Acta*. Drane, p. 207 ff.

CHAPTER XV

¹⁵² See also *Vitae Fratrum*, Book 4, chap. 23, for story of the sister of St. Thomas Aquinas appearing to him after death with the promise, "Very few of your Order will ever be lost."

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